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Champion

20 February 2019 Vol 26 • Issue 8 www.champnews.com

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INSIDE THIS WEEK:

Nursery bids fond farewell to manager

Recognition for schools' achievements

COUNCIL TO SCALE BACK LOCAL PLAN

Report by **Kenny Parker**

Authority chiefs agree to reduce number of houses proposed and amount of Green Belt to be released

LEADERS at West Lancs Council have bowed to public pressure over the proposed Local Plan and will significantly reduce the number of houses planned and the amount of Green Belt released.

When announced last year, the new plan, aimed at shaping development in the borough for the next 30 years, was described by council chiefs as an "exciting blueprint for the future of West Lancashire" which would also ensure the borough would benefit from economic development between the Liverpool Superport, the Atlantic Gateway and Salford Quays

Included in the proposals were plans to release 190 hectares of land for employment purposes and also make provision for nearly 16,000 new homes. At the time the authority stated it would be making significant contribution to the future development needs of Sefton and Liverpool.

The council claimed that this would only involve turning over 1.7% of land currently earmarked for Green Belt (590 hectares) and that West Lancs would still have one of the largest Green Belt areas by percentage of any borough in the country.

However, the proposals were met with dismay by political rivals and hundreds of residents contacted MP Rosie Cooper to express their concerns.

Councillor John Hodson: "responding to residents' views"

Rosie Cooper MP expressed concerns about the original plan.

Conservative Councillor David Westley said the authority did not appreciate the importance of Green Belt and along with Our West Lancshire's Councillor Adrian Owens, he claimed that the current Local Plan, which runs until 2027 was adequately meeting the needs of the people of the borough.

Cllr. Owens also said that there was not sufficient infrastructure to cope with such a large-scale development.

And the OWL leader said he had been provided with leaked emails showing opposition to the plans within the local Labour party and a letter to a constituent indicated that West Lancs Labour MP Rosie Cooper had concerns about the plans.

Now, following a public consultation held between October and December, the ruling Labour group has announced that it will make "significant changes" to the plan.

Councillor John Hodson, the council's portfolio holder for planning, said: "We are now at the stage of the process where we are able to begin responding to residents' views and demonstrate that any new Local Plan will be designed to put West Lancashire's needs first.

"We can say with confidence that there will be a significant reduction in housing numbers and a reduced impact on the Green Belt.

"We will ensure that there are better protections against unwanted development such as encroachment upon the Green Belt or significant housing developments where infrastructure is lacking.

"Finally, we will strongly resist pressure from neighbouring authorities to build for their housing needs, so that the next Local Plan is focused on building for the needs of West Lancashire residents."

Council Leader, Councillor Ian Moran added: "As we have stated from the beginning, this is a process of public consultation and we are listening."

Continued inside

Court told of suspected Neo-Nazi's plot to murder West Lancs MP

AN alleged Neo-Nazi plotted to murder West Lancashire MP Rosie Cooper with a machete on behalf of National Action, a banned extreme right-wing group, a court has heard.

The Old Bailey has been told that Jack Renshaw, 23, of Skelmersdale purchased the machete and discussed his plan at a meeting at a pub in Warrington in July 2017.

Renshaw allegedly wanted to kill Ms Cooper, 68, because she supported immigration.

He states that he prepared acts of terrorism but does not accept he was a member of National Action, a group which was banned in December 2016.

Thwarted

Renshaw's plot was thwarted by a whistle-blower who informed the Hope Not Hate organisation which opposes right-wing political racism.

He is on trial with Andrew Clarke, 34, from Prescot and 36-year-old Michal Trubini, from Warrington who are also accused of being part of National Action.

They also both deny being members of the group.

National Action is opposed to democracy and the British state. It has been banned after it supported the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox.

During the trial Duncan Atkinson QC, prosecuting said there is "no dispute" that Renshaw was planning acts of terrorism for "politically motivated murder."

The case at the Old Bailey continues.

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Edge Hill comic strip project aims to allay kids' hospital fears

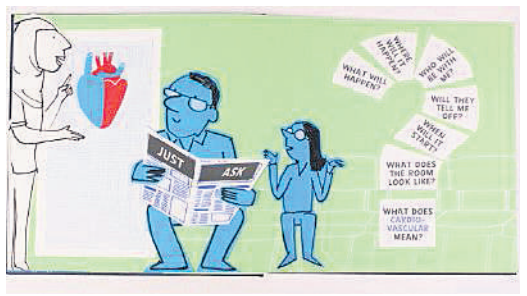
Scheme to be launched with fun event at university

RESEARCHERS at Edge Hill University have created a new comic strip and animation to help children know what to expect and what might happen when they go to hospital.

Children Coming to Hospital will be launched at a free, fun event for youngsters, parents and professionals at the Ormskirk campus on Thursday (February 21) between 1 and 4pm.

It will involve, arts and craft activities, a play hospital and ward and a chance to explore a virtual hospital ward, and play an X-ray game.

Professor Lucy Bray, Professor Bernie Carter and Ed Horowicz created the unique materials after talking to children aged seven to 14 about their fears and feelings about visiting hospital and having medical procedures.



One of the comic strip images created by researchers from Edge Hill University.

Working with local animators, MisterMunro, the team then created two different versions of the animations, one for children and one aimed at doctors, nurses and other health professionals.

Professor Bray said: "It can be hard for children to know what to expect when they come to hospital for tests and procedures. We know that they tend to have a better experience if they know what will happen and have chance to prepare themselves.

"Talking to children they told us that hospitals can be boring and can seem scary with lots of strange-looking equipment and noises. They often don't know what's going to happen to them.

"Children can struggle to join in the conversations which happen within hospitals, with adults using words which are strange and unfamiliar to them. Our work hopes to help children know that it is okay to ask questions to find out what's going on."

The team used the information they gathered to make a colourful, child-friendly animation and comic strip telling youngsters what to expect, encouraging them to ask as many questions as they want and to prepare for their hospital visit.

Professor Bray added: "The flip side to the young person's version is one aimed at health professionals which shows what children might feel and what they're often too scared to say."

The adult version shows children feeling small and overwhelmed, how they can worry over being told off for having an injury and how it makes them feel if staff talk to adults rather than them.

"We hope both versions will help. We want children to know what to expect if they go to hospital or a medical setting for a procedure. Similarly, we want professionals to think about how a child might be feeling."

The team will be working with the university and other organisations to share the animation through social media and the comic strip will be distributed to hospitals, surgeries and medical centres across the region and beyond.

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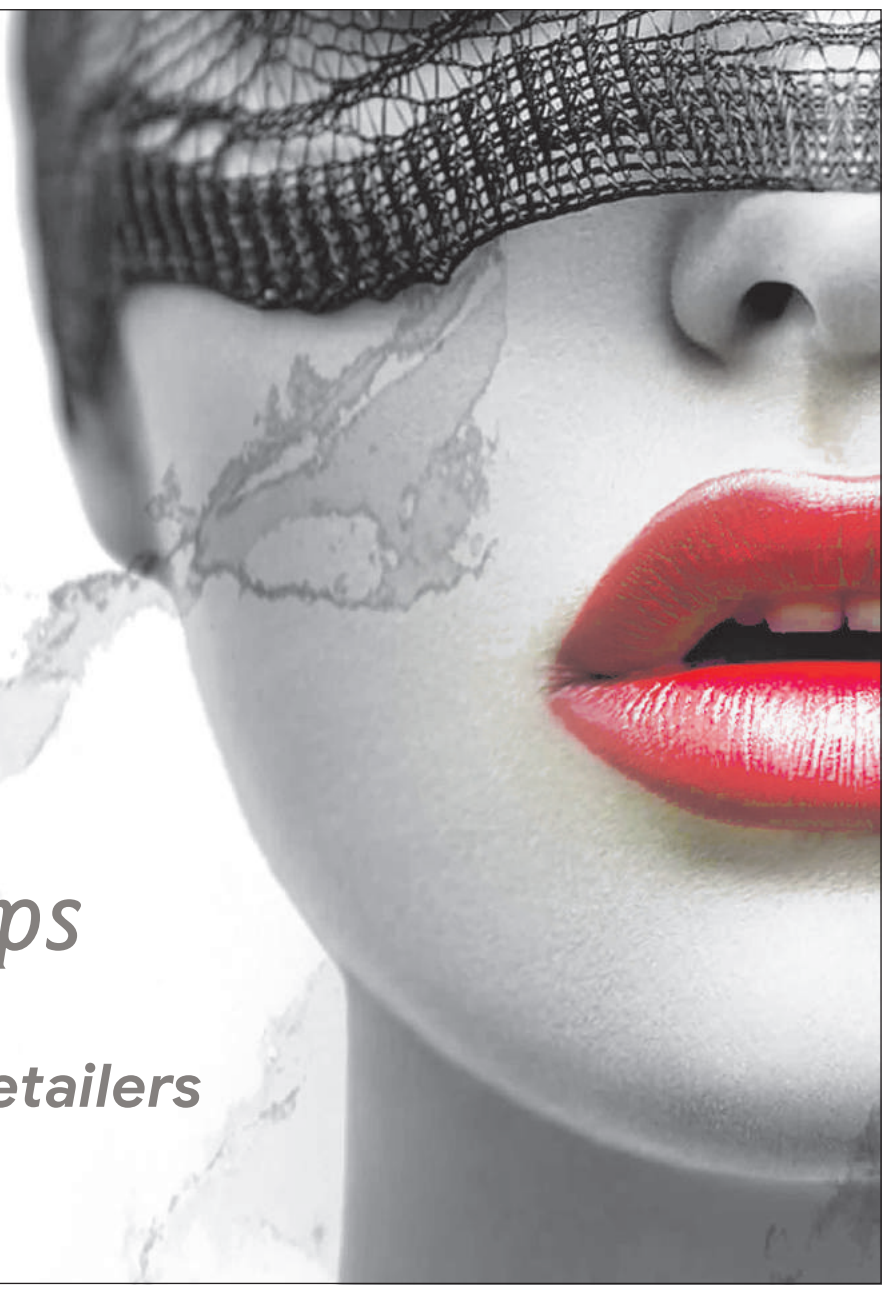

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College insists safety concerns about access to 3G pitch are "real"

Report by **Henry James**

The access road to the site.

OFFICIALS at West Lancashire College say there are "real health and concerns" about access to the disused £650,000 3G pitch next to the former Glenburn Sports College in Skelmersdale.

They were hitting back at claims by Councillor Adrian Owners, leader of the Our West Lancashire independent group, who accused the college of blocking plans for young people to play on the pitch for what he called "health and safety excuses."

However the Newcastle College Group (NCG), of which West Lancashire College is a division, said they could not agree the proposals as the access route to the pitch is via derelict college buildings and the safety of anyone using it "cannot be guaranteed".

A spokesman for NCG told the Champion: "There are real health and safety concerns around the now empty former college buildings at Yewdale, in Skelmersdale.

"The site is plagued with vandalism, there is no electricity or street lighting and in fact it was set on fire earlier this week.

"Access to the 3G pitches is via the college buildings' access road and it would be irresponsible of NCG as owner of the site to allow visitors to be attracted to the site in its present condition when their safety cannot be guaranteed.

"NCG makes absolutely no 'excuses' for putting the safety of young people first.

"West Lancashire Borough Council have yet to determine the potential long-term use of the site and we are working closely with them to agree next steps."

A new Skelmersdale community group, including people involved in the town's primary schools, have received an in-principle agreement from Lancashire County Council to use the all-weather pitch at Glenburn.

Meanwhile Councillor Owens maintained that the statement issued on behalf of NCG was "a flimsy excuse".

He said: "The statement from the college's PR agency with an office in London is lacking in any quote or comment from a health and safety professional. Instead the same points are simply regurgitated.

"Many months ago the community group made clear to the college that the pitch would only be for daylight use and yet the lack of street lights is still being put up as a flimsy excuse. Neither the access road nor the car park are directly adjacent to the buildings, so the community group can't see what the risk is in using these.

"It is well known that sites which are in use suffer less trespass and vandalism. The community group would have trained facility management staff on site each day that the all-weather pitch was in use.

"It seems strange for the college to say that they feel it irresponsible to let people on the site when it's already open access and being used by dog walkers, and people using the pitch regardless.

"The county council were at a loss as to why the college didn't demolish their buildings at the same time as the school was demolished. A joint demolition project would have saved both council taxpayers and the college significant sums.

"The college has an excellent opportunity here to reinforce the great work it does in the town and wider borough and I hope that they listen to the many people who have contacted them in recent days."

Council leaders pledge to make 'significant changes' to Local Plan

From Page1

And the decision has been welcomed by Rosie Cooper who contacted the borough council to share residents' views.

She said: "I am, of course, pleased that the council have listened to the views of my constituents and look to be scrapping large elements of this unwanted 30-year local plan.

"Hundreds of residents contacted me expressing their deep concerns with poor roads, schools at capacity and an already buckling GP, hospital and NHS provision locally.

"Many residents agreed with the need to build more houses, provide for their children and reduce homelessness, but not at the scale at which was proposed or the manner of building on Grade I agricultural farmland in the Green Belt.

"With future uncertainty, it would be foolish to press ahead with allowing development take place on land we may very well need to provide our own food supplies.

"I now call on the council to urgently work with residents and identify where there is West Lancashire housing need for the elderly, disabled, young families starting out and those who are in genuine need of access to social, affordable or council housing.

"It may even be time to abandon these plans altogether and go back to the drawing board."

Local pupils join national schools walk-out over climate change concerns

YOUNGSTERS from Lathom High School and Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College joined pupils from across the UK who went 'on strike' on Friday, February 15 as part of a worldwide campaign calling for action on climate change.

The Skelmersdale pupils walked out of school at 11am as part of a nationwide protest organised by the group Youth Strike 4 Climate who claimed some 15,000 young people in towns and cities across the UK joined in.

The Champion was contacted by a number of those involved in the strike in Skelmersdale.

One said: "This is a protest against global warming. We want the Government to listen to what we have to say. The future of the planet is uncertain if carbon dioxide emissions are not reduced by 50%. The older generation is not taking anything we say into consideration.

"We also want the voting age to be reduced to 16. This would give us more of a say on political issues.

"We will continue to walk out of school until the Government does something about this. It is up to the Government to make a change."

Meanwhile a group of 14 and 15-year-old pupils from Our Lady Queen of Peace, who asked not to be named, told us: "We want to raise awareness of global warming and the fact that the ice caps are melting. This is an issue that we feel passionate about and we are scared for our future.

"We would like our voices to be heard. The MPs and the Government should listen to our concerns.

"Animals are dying at an alarming rate because of global warming."

The youngsters' call for action was supported by Skelmersdale North Councillor Neil Furey, although he felt they should have remained on school premises.

He said" 'Last Friday's protest should send out a very strong message to this Government that young people deserve a voice and a say on the damaging impacts of climate change. We must remember these are the future custodians of this planet and they will have to live with the consequences if more action is not taken to deal with the causes of climate change.

"I understand that large numbers of schoolchildren in Skelmersdale took part. It's disappointing they have to resort to such action although I support them in expressing their concerns. However I was disappointed that children walked out of school and left the school grounds. It would have been best to remain on school premises

"I have learned that some Year 11 children may have their end of year prom withdrawn and I would be very disappointed if this happened. I would hope that schools recognise the very real concerns children have with climate change and they exercise some restraint on this occasion."

Life sentences for pair who murdered vulnerable man

TWO people who murdered a vulnerable Skelmersdale man in his own home, after subjecting him to a vicious and prolonged attack then setting his body alight, have been jailed for life.

Deborah Andrews, 44, of Elmstead and 37-year-old William Vaill, of Evington, both Skelmersdale, were sentenced on Friday (February 15) for the murder of Eamon Brady in July last year.

The pair were arrested following a fire at Mr Brady's address.

Firefighters were called around at 7.30am on Saturday, July 21 to reports of an incident at a property in Elmridge.

Inside, crews found Mr Brady with a number of injuries to his head and torso. A quilt had been placed on the lower part of his body and set alight.

The 44-year-old was declared dead at the scene and detectives from Lancashire Police launched a murder investigation.

Initial enquiries revealed the victim had been with Vaill and Andrews the previous day (Friday, July 20) and CCTV footage showed the pair leaving Mr Brady's home at around 4.50am on July 21, carrying two bags.

Officers traced Vaill and Andrews to a nearby address, where it was revealed they had sold several items belonging to Mr Brady.

William Vaill.

Deborah Andrews.

Victim Eamon Brady.

These included a games console and sound system. Further items belonging to Mr Brady were also found.

Vaill and Andrews were quickly arrested and charged by police.

A post-mortem examination later revealed the victim had suffered multiple head injuries, a number of stab wounds to his upper body and neck, and significant injuries to his lower body from the fire.

Both defendants initially pleaded not guilty but Vaill later changed his plea, also admitting a charge of arson with intent.

Andrews was tried at Preston Crown Court and convicted of murder and arson with intent.

Vaill was given a life sentence with a minimum term of 28-and-a-half years and Andrews was handed a life sentence with a minimum term of 28 years.

Detective Superintendent Claire McEnery, of Lancashire Police, said: "Vaill and Andrews are clearly extremely dangerous offenders and these prison sentences reflect the gravity of their actions.

"The pair launched a vicious and prolonged attack causing numerous, horrific injuries to Mr Brady which proved fatal. We welcome today's result and hope it provides some comfort for Mr Brady's family. My thoughts remain with them."

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Chance to nominate favourite buildings for design awards

RESIDENTS in the borough who have a favourite building or development that they feel is a real asset to the area are once again being invited to put it forward for a local authority award.

Nominations are being sought for the 2019 West Lancashire Design Awards, which aim to acknowledge and promote the importance of good-quality development and building design.

The scheme aims to show the council's commitment in showcasing good design and in particular showing how well-designed buildings and places can greatly improve the local environment and contribute to a sense of place.

Moor Hall in Aughton winner of the commercial category at the 2017 West Lancashire Design Awards.

Judging in the awards will be in five categories as follows:

- **Residential developments creating more than one new property.**
- **New single dwellings and extensions to existing property.**
- **The conversion and re-use of existing buildings.**
- **Commercial developments.**
- **Landscaping proposals.**

Awards will be given for designs which contribute to the overall quality of the borough and will focus on community, economic and environmental regeneration and the use of sustainable building techniques. Buildings and sites must have been completed after June 2017 to be eligible.

Councillor John Hodson, West Lancs Council's cabinet member for planning, said: "It is important to recognise and reward well-designed new developments and I would encourage people to nominate the buildings and schemes they feel have enhanced the area they live in.

"The council is committed to encouraging good design throughout the borough and the awards are a great way to celebrate distinctive, high-quality development here in West Lancashire.

"The scheme, which has been running since 1989, highlights the council's wish to work in partnership with architects, developers, owners and other agencies involved in planning to improve our built environment and the quality of life for all the residents of West Lancashire."

People can nominate online or download the forms by visiting www.westlancs.gov.uk/design. Alternatively nomination forms are available at, the customer service points in Derby Street, Ormskirk, and The Concourse, Skelmersdale; by emailing Ian Bond, heritage and environment manager, at ian.bond@westlancs.gov.uk or by calling 01695 585167.

Closing date for nominations is 5pm on Friday, May 17.

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Nursery manager retires after 33 years' service

Report by **Henry James**

STAFF and pupils at a local nursery have bid a fond farewell to a long-serving member of the management team.

Donna Callaghan has retired as manager of the Moorside Community Academy nursery after 33 years service.

To mark the occasion a special assembly was held at the nursery in Back Lane, Holland Moor attended by pupils, teachers and even some former pupils who are now parents of youngsters at the school.

Donna said: "Although my retirement has been planned for a long time, now that the time has come I do have mixed feelings. I feel excited for my future plans but also sad because I am leaving my 'second home'.

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents, past and present, for allowing me to be a part of their childrens's education and I feel so privileged to have been able to work with such caring and fantastic children at Moorside.

"I would also like to thank the governors and staff for all their support, it has been an absolute pleasure working with such a fabulous team.

Headteacher at Moorside Primary, Richard Davis, added: "Mrs. Callaghan has loyally served our school community for the last 33 years and has seen generations of families come through our wonderful school.

Donna Callaghan with some of the children at Moorside Community Academy nursery.

"She has always given her absolute best and has been a major asset to the school, always ensuring that our children had the best start to their school journey here at Moorside.

"She will be greatly missed by everyone linked to our community, she is not only a wonderful teacher but a truly amazing person.

"It has been a real pleasure working alongside her for the 14 years I have been at the school and on behalf of the staff, parents, governors, and more importantly the children here at Moorside, we wish Mrs Callaghan a long, happy and prosperous retirement!"

Primary school pupils enjoy a wiz of a day!

Pupils at St James' Catholic Primary at their Harry Potter Day.

A LOCAL primary school was transformed into Hogwarts for the day when it staged a special Harry Potter Day.

Pupils and staff at St James' Catholic Primary dressed as their favourite character from the J. K. Rowling series of fantasy novels about a young wizard and his friends, complete with wands and cloaks.

And headteacher of the school in Ashurst Road, Mrs Blacoe, was delighted with the way the whole school got into the spirit of the event by dressing up. She said: "Miss Wright, our English subject leader, organised the day as reading is part of our school improvement plan and we want our children to develop a love of reading as a lifelong skill. Planning fun and meaningful events, such as this, keeps reading high profile in our curriculum."

Throughout the day, the children took part in Harry Potter-themed activities, such as wand and potion-making, as well practising their descriptive writing skills about the Hogwarts castle

The Learning Stars Group at their Dementia Friends session.

More new recruits sign up to Dementia Friends

A DEMENTIA Friends session was held at Cardinal Heenan House in Up Holland on Friday, February 8 for relatives and the local community.

The Alzheimer's Society initiative aims to raise awareness of what it's like to live with dementia and the sessions give participants the opportuity to understand the five key messages.

Christine Edge from Cardinal Heenan, who is a Dementia Friends Champion, said the session went "really well" and helped everyone who attended understand more about the effects of dementia.

The next session at Cardinal Heenan will be held on Friday, March 8 starting at 2.30pm and anyone interested in attending is asked to call Christine on 01695 622885.

Meanwhile members of the Learning Stars Group for people with learning disabilities, who hold weekly meetings in Skelmersdale, Ormskirk and Southport, have become Dementia Friends following a session organised by local Dementia Champion, Joe Sherville.

Retrospective planning application for beauty salon recommended for approval by officers

A RESIDENT has issued a retrospective planning application for a change of use of the rear of a residential garage at Miners View, Up Holland for the running of a beauty salon business.

The application was originally set to be decided under the council's delegation scheme but leader of the council, Councillor Ian Moran, asked for it to be referred to committee to see if restrictions are needed.

The application concerns a detached two-storey home with attached double garage situated at the end of a small cul-de-sac in a modern housing estate with parking spaces at the front of the garage.

It seeks to change the rear part of the garage into a beauty salon with the rest used as a garage or storage space.

The owner of the home is the only person working in the beauty salon.

Lancashire County Council's Highways Development Support has no objection to the proposals. They state in the document for the planning meeting that: "The proposed development should have a negligible impact on highway safety and highway capacity within the immediate vicinity of the site."

The Environment Health Officer (EHO) has no objections to the application in principle but adds: "I feel a restriction in the hours of operation and any deliveries/waste collections would be appropriate in order to protect residential amenity. I would also advise restricting the permission to only the applicant to prevent the expansion of the business or the use of employees in the future."

The council has received letters both in support and against the application.

West lancs Council's director of development and regeneration services, John Harrison who has looked at the design of the application in documents for Thursday's meeting of the planning committee and comments: "It is my view that the change of use does not adversely impact on the street scene or the visual amenity of the area."

The EHO has recommended hours of operation to finish at 7pm Tuesday to Friday but the applicant is seeking to open until 8pm. And Mr Harrison has stated: "It is my view that due to the level of operations proposed it would not be injurious to the residential amenity of the neighbours for the premises to offer beauty treatments until 8pm."

Mr Harrison believes that the proposal will not have a "significant impact on highway safety."

Officers have recommended that the application should be approved with conditions.

New play equipment installed in park

NEW play equipment has been installed at Stanley Coronation Park in Skelmersdale ahead of schedule.

Designed for youngsters aged 13-plus, each piece of apparatus offers a different challenge.

The equipment includes a multi-activity climbing unit with overhead bars, a multi-person rope swing and a basket swing.

The council says the additional pieces will complement the existing play provision for younger children and an outdoor gym facility in the park in Sandy Lane.

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Long-serving foster care couple honoured at County Hall lunch

Report by **Henry James**

A COUPLE from Skelmersdale were among foster carers from across Lancashire honoured at a special lunch at County Hall.

Alison and Arthur Poulter have been foster carers for 26 years during which time they have cared for more than 50 children.

The celebration, organised by Lancashire County Council and attended by councillors and senior officers, was held to recognise the efforts of carers in the county who have been fostering for at least 15 years, caring for more than 750 children.

County Councillor Susie Charles, Lancashire's cabinet member for children, young people and schools, said: "It is such a pleasure to have the opportunity to be able to recognise the incredible efforts made by our foster carers.

The foster carers' celebration lunch.

Appreciated

"All of our foster carers work tirelessly to improve the lives of looked after children in Lancashire and the importance of the work they do is much appreciated by us all.

"Being able to hold this lunch gave us a chance to meet the foster carers and to thank them. It also gave us the opportunity to mark the length of time that some of our foster carers have carried out this incredibly important role.

"For many years now they have all opened up their hearts and their homes to provide children with a secure and loving place to live and they make a massive difference in improving children's lives each day.

"I'd like to offer my personal thanks to each one of them, including those who unfortunately weren't able to attend the celebration."

Chairman of the county council, Councillor Anne Cheetham, who hosted the lunch, said: "I was a foster carer myself for 11 years so it was a great pleasure for me to be able to host a lunch to honour the foster carers and to recognise the important role they do."

The county council is currently recruiting new people who can foster all ages of children, particularly siblings who need to stay together and older children.

No formal experience or qualifications are needed, all that is required is a spare room and the desire to make a difference to a local child's life.

A package of support is available 24/7 to help foster carers in their role, including local support groups, their own social worker, a dedicated helpline and flexible training.

High-achieving primary schools celebrate national recognition

AFTER our recent article about national recognition for two local primary schools, two more have contacted us to tell us of their achievements.

Crawford Village Primary School, which was rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted inspectors, was in the top 1% of schools nationally for the second consecutive year after celebrating another strong set of SATS results in summer 2018, following from their success in 2017.

100% of pupils met or exceeded the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 over both years.

Headteacher, Debra Eaton, said: "We are delighted by our pupils' incredible achievements and all the hard work that they and the staff have put in.

"At Crawford Village, we consistently strive to deliver academic excellence, and we are passionate about ensuring that every one of our pupils achieves their full potential.

Head boy and head girl at Trinity Primary School, Kane Forshaw and Lucy Travis, with headteacher, Mr Kershaw and Year 6 teachers, Mrs MacDonald and Mrs Thornhill.

Some of the pupils at Crawford Village Primary School.

'Valued'

"We realise that education is more than just sitting tests, and for many of our families it is the school's small size which makes it such a special place for children to learn and grow.

"We are very fortunate to have such a strong staff team and supportive governors and parents all of whom help to ensure our children flourish and feel valued within a tight-knit community."

Meanwhile Trinity Primary School in Skelmersdale received a letter from the Secretary of State for Education, Damian Hinds and the Minister for School Standards, Nick Gibb, congratulating staff and pupils on the progress the pupils have demonstrated in the reading, writing and mathematics Key Stage 2 assessments.

This puts the school among the top 3% of schools in England.

A spokesperson for the school in Kiln Lane said: "The pupils and staff work so hard and this letter is a lovely acknowledgement of their efforts."

Sophie the friendly Tyrannosaurus Rex with pupils at Hillside Primary School.

Friendly T-Rex helps primary pupils get their teeth into dinosaur history project!

YOUNGSTERS at a Skelmersdale school enjoyed getting their teeth into a project with a difference when they took part in a Dinosaur History week.

As part of a role play set-up for the week a dinosaur egg was "discovered" at Hillside Primary leading to a visit by leading paleontologist, 'Professor Terence Dactyl'!

Later pupils at the school in Egerton, Tanhouse were joined by Sophie the Tyrannosaurus Rex, who managed to squeeze into the school hall as she is only a 'baby' at seven years old and turned out to be friendly and not at all carnivorous!

Headteacher, Mrs Aspinwall-Livesey said: "The children learnt so much from meeting Sophie and learning all about her life in the wild and from the fossil workshop which followed on later."

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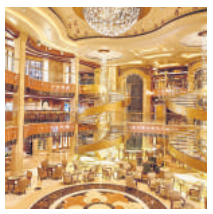

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Petition aims to save respite service for carers of children with special needs

A PETITION has been launched aimed at reversing a decision to axe respite services for parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities or special needs in Lancashire.

County council chiefs say that ending the Lancashire Break Time services, which are currently available in West Lancashire, will save the authority £1.04m per annum.

The decision was agreed at the council's budget meeting on Thursday, February 14. However, some of the proposals, including those affecting the respite service, are subject to a public consultation currently taking place and council leader, County Councillor Geoff Driver, says all views will be listened to and that amendments to policies can be made later.

Lancashire Break Time provides short breaks of at least two hours to the primary carer of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities, aged four to 18, whilst the child or young person attends a fun group activity.

The service is only available to children who are not in receipt of an assessed social care outreach package. Those with a higher level of need will receive services through their package of care.

Labour County Councillor Lizzi Collinge says the decision to cut the Break Time service will force

County Councillor Collinge.

needy families into crisis and cost the authority more money in the long term. And she has set up a petition calling for the county council to scrap the plans.

She said: "These shocking proposals not only mean further hardship for families dealing with additional needs, they could well end up costing the county council more money in the long run.

"The alternative will be to go through a costly and long-winded formal assessment with social workers, with many children not reaching the high statutory threshold for help.

"Children and families who don't get regular respite are far more likely to end up in a crisis situation and residential care for children in crisis costs a very large amount of money. It wouldn't take many children across Lancashire going into crisis to wipe out any savings and the human cost of these cuts is staggering.

"I'd urge families affected to fill in the consultation and share the petition with their family and friends."

Cllr. Driver said: "Lancashire Break Time is additional to the core services provided by the county council. It is a range of activities by various providers funded by the county council. It is not uniform across the county and the needs of the children using the service are not assessed. So, unfortunately, some children with quite severe needs do not have access to the service.

" I understand the concerns of parents of children currently using the service but we have a responsibility for all children with special education needs and disabilities and must ensure that the resources are there to provide the services they need, especially those with profound needs and disabilities."

The petition can be found at www.change.org by searching for Keep Lancashire Break Time for Kids with Disabilities/SEN.

To comment on the council consultation, which runs until Monday, March 25, visit www.lancashire.gov.uk.

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Edge Hill chief's pay tops £300k

Figures reveal vice-chancellor's salary package is double PM's

Report by **Henry James**

NEW figures published by independent watchdog the Office for Students (OfS) reveal that the vice-chancellor of Edge Hill University, Dr John Cater, is paid more than £300,000 per annum.

The data, highlighting the salaries of senior staff at the country's universities, show that Dr Cater received £349,000 in the financial year 2017/18.

That total was made up of a basic salary of £338,000 plus 'taxable benefits' of £11,000. In 2016/17 he received £343,000, made up £333,000 basic salary plus 'taxable benefits' of £10,000.

The OfS said that 15 employees at the Ormskirk university earned at least £100,000 in 2017/18.

Also disclosed were the figures paid for "compensation for loss of office" to staff leaving the university. Edge Hill paid £87,000 to the three people who left in 2017-18.

Of the 133 universities in England, 124 of them pay their vice-chancellors more than Prime Minister Theresa May's £150,000 salary, while their vice-chancellors more than £500,000 in the 2017-18.

Commenting on the data, Nicola Dandridge, chief executive of the Office for Students, said: "It is not for the Office for Students to set a vice-chancellor's pay. We understand that running a university is a significant and complex task, and it is right that those who excel in their roles should be well rewarded.

"Despite this, where pay is out of kilter, or salary increases at the top outstrip pay awards to other staff, vice-chancellors should be prepared to answer tough questions from their staff, student bodies and the public.

"It is good to see signs of pay restraint at some universities, with some vice-chancellors refusing a salary increase. A number of governing bodies have reduced the basic pay of their vice-chancellor, though we acknowledge that it can be difficult to revisit contractual obligations while a vice-chancellor is in post. We expect to see further progress next year.

Dr John Cater.

"Universities receive significant funding, both in the form of direct grant drawn from public taxation as well as funding from student loans. It is important that both students and the public can be assured that they are receiving value for money for this funding, and restraining excessive senior pay is part of this. Universities - and individual vice-chancellors - need to be confident that they can justify the pay that they receive. ."

A spokesperson for Edge Hill University commented: "As reported in our publicly-available annual Report and Financial Statements, some senior roles including deputy vice-chancellor, pro vice-chancellors and a small number of very senior academics receive above £100k when pension contributions and health benefits are included. Senior pay reflects the level of responsibility involved in leading a large and complex organisation with a turnover of £126m that makes a £222m contribution to the UK economy, with 14,256 students and 3,647 staff."

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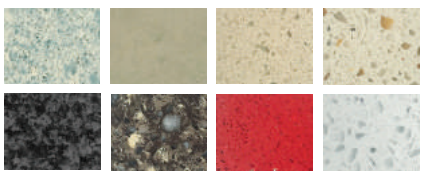

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Hospital trust joins programme to help nurses in hardship

Report by **Kenny Parker**

BOSSES at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust say it is helping to provide a "long-term safety net" for its nursing professionals by joining the Cavell Nurses' Trust membership programme.

Cavell Nurses' Trust is a UK charity that supports nurses, midwives and health care assistants who might be experiencing personal or financial hardship, often due to illness, disability, older age or domestic abuse.

Membership of its 'Working with' programme provides the hospitals trust with tools to show their commitment to the well-being of nursing professionals and increases awareness of the support Cavell Nurses' Trust can provide.

Paul Jebb, Deputy Director of Nursing at Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust.

Paul Jebb, Deputy Director of Nursing at Southport and Ormskirk Trust, said: "We are proud to be working with Cavell Nurses' Trust

"Supporting our nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants is fundamental to the values of our organisation. Without them, and members of our other teams, we would not be able to deliver caring services to those in our hospitals."

Cavell Nurses' Trust says that last year it experienced its highest ever number of enquiries from nursing professionals seeking help. On average, it received 63 enquiries every week with a total of 3,300 approaching the charity in 2018 for support.

Of the people Cavell Nurses' Trust helped in the last year 91% told the trust the support positively affected their mental health; 83% said the support they received positively affected their physical health; and 76% said the support they received helped them get back to, or stay in, work.

Delighted

Chief executive of Cavell Nurses' Trust, John Orchard, said: "I'm so pleased to welcome Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust to our membership programme.

"Cavell Nurses' Trust is here for nursing professionals when they face difficult circumstances and I'm delighted that through our partnership we can highlight the support available to nursing professionals at the trust."

Nursing professionals can apply to Cavell Nurses' Trust for advice and financial assistance by visiting their website (www.cavellnursestrust.org) or by calling 01527 595999.

"Supporting our nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants is fundamental to the values of our organisation"

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Quizmaster wanted for pensioner's charity fundraiser

Report by **Kenny Parker**

A PENSIONER is appealing for a quizmaster willing to offer his or her services for free at an event organised to raise funds for two charities.

Ron Snape from Rufford, has pledged to spend the rest of his life raising money for Parkinson's UK and the North West Air Ambulance in memory of his wife Pauline, who passed away at the age of 79 in August last year following a five-year battle with Parkinson's disease.

The 81-year-old has already staged one fundraising quiz at his local, The Hesketh Arms, and planned to hold another at the venue in Liverpool Road, Rufford on Tuesday, March 12.

But he has hit a snag as both the pub's regular quizmasters are unavailable on that date. Ron has already distributed about 90 posters advertising the event and is anxious not to cancel so is hoping an appeal in the Champion will help him recruit a volunteer.

Ron Snape with a photo of his late wife, Pauline.

He said: "It might seem like it's only a matter of reading questions out but that's easier said than done - you have to have the personality to carry off something like that.

"I am not looking for someone who necessarily has vast experience, just someone who knows their way around a microphone, can ask the questions and jolly things along a little bit."

Anyone who can help is asked to contact Ron on 01704 821296.

Ron pledged to raise money for the two charities for the support they gave to Pauline.

Shortly before she was diagnosed with the degenerative disorder of the central nervous system she fell down the stairs suffering a broken neck and was airlifted to hospital in Liverpool by the North West Air Ambulance which is financed by public donations, charity events, lottery membership and a network of retail outlets, who provide vital funding to keep the service flying.

Ron added: "I just want to raise as much money for the charities as possible in memory of my wife and I am dedicating the rest of my life to it."

Other events in the pipeline are coffee mornings at local churches, another quiz at the Hop Vine, Burscough, in April, and and a BBQ at the Bull and Dog pub, Burscough in June when it is hoped there will be an appearance by an air ambulance helicopter.

Motorist charged with intent to supply after 40 bags of class A and class B drugs found in car

POLICE have charged a man with drug-dealing after stopping a car during patrols which also disrupted youths involved in anti-social behaviour.

Ormskirk and Burscough police say that a West Lancashire Immediate Response team was out in the community "actively patrolling" the Ormskirk, Aughton and Burscough area on Wednesday February 13.

A post on social media stated: "Since starting at 3pm this afternoon we have spoken to, stop-searched and moved on various youths in Ormksirk and Aughton who are actively involved in anti-social behaviour.

"We also stopped a vehicle in Ormskirk suspected to have been involved in committing crime. When speaking to the driver, officers located around 40 bags of class A and class B drugs.

"The driver has been arrested for possession with intent to supply."

Newburgh blacksmith John Westhead who was killed after being posted to France with the Army Service Corps.

Heritage group talk on village blacksmith killed in First World War

THE Lathom Park Trust will stage its annual general meeting on Tuesday, March 5 starting at 7.30pm in the Ellerbrook Suite of the Briars Hall Hotel, Lathom.

Following the AGM guest speaker Martin Jones will present a talk on Newburgh blacksmith John Westhead who was killed after being posted to France with the Army Service Corps during the First World War.

John, who lived at Briars Lane, Lathom with his wife Eliza and family, had gone to work at the Lathom Park Remount Depot as a civilian blacksmith soon after the start of the war. He died on October 26, 1916, aged 44 and is buried in the Bouzincourt Communal Cemetery.

Martin Jones uses letters and documents from John and his family to depict his experiences and those of his comrades during those early years at Lathom Remount Depot.

The annual general meeting commences at 7.30pm and members only are allowed to vote on trust matters. Non-Members are welcome to attend for a small donation but cannot take part in the AGM business.

The talk will start at around 8 to 8.15pm and there will be a raffle and the bar will be open.

Constabulary preparing for possible disorder in wake of 'no-deal' Brexit

Report by **Kenny Parker**

LANCASHIRE Police is currently training officers to prepare for any public disorder which might arise as a result of Brexit.

A spokesperson for the force said: "We are preparing for the operational impact of a no-deal Brexit, including the impact of delays at ports and the potential for protest and disorder.

"We have no intelligence to suggest a rise in crime or disorder at this time but we are considering worse-case scenarios provided by the Government to inform our local planning.

"In the event of any serious civil unrest or disorder elsewhere in the country, Lancashire Constabulary may be required to provide police officers to assist with policing operations to help restore and maintain order.

"To ensure we stay resourced and resilient in Lancashire if we're called upon to mobilise our more specially trained officers, we are currently training all our police officers in basic public order skills as a precautionary measure.

"Working with others through the Lancashire Local Resilience Forum we are ready to respond to emergencies to ensure the safety of the public."

Meanwhile the Government's guidance to health authorities is to undertake local EU Exit readiness planning, local risk assessments and plan for wider potential impacts,

While the guidance acknowledges that "access" across the English Channel will be significantly reduced for about six months, the Government says it will prioritise the movement of medicines to ensure the flow of all these products will continue unimpeded after March 29, the date of Britain's scheduled departure

The guidance states that a key action of the strategy has been to ask pharmaceutical companies to stockpile a minimum of six weeks' additional supply in the UK, over and above their business as usual operational buffer stocks, by March 29.

However, the Government has directed local authorities NOT to stockpile and to discourage patients from doing so.

A spokesperson for NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group said: "The CCG is following national guidance in preparation for a possible no-deal Brexit."

A spokesperson for West Lancs Council said: "The council is working with multi-agency partners from across Lancashire with regards the possibility of a no-deal Brexit. Discussions are ongoing with regards to the likely impact and partners are liasing with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and central government to address issues being highlighted at a local level."

Lancashire County Council has not responded to a request for comment.

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Mum and baby shop shortlisted in county business awards scheme

A WEST Lancs shop that sells baby products online and in store has been shortlisted for a prestigious county-wide business award.

Direct 4 Baby of Langley Place, Burscough has been nominated in the Ecommerce Business category of the Red Rose Awards 2019. The family-owned business sells mother and baby related goods in the UK, Ireland and the EU.

Organised by Lancashire Business View magazine, the Red Rose Awards, launched in 2011, aim to recognise and celebrate businesses in the county.

Hundreds of nominations have been whittled down to just six finalists in each of 25 categories, ranging from new business of the year to the international achievement award.

Now the shortlised hopefuls have one final chance to present their story to panels of Red Rose Awards judges over two days at Ewood Park, Blackburn this month

A total of more than 70 respected judges, in panels of four or five, will have the final say with the winners' names kept under wraps until the prizegiving at Blackpool's Winter Gardens on Thursday, March 14.

Publisher of Lancashire Business View, Richard Slater, said: "We have fettled the format ever so slightly for 2019. We have limited the number of categories each business can enter to three.

"The result has been that some of the smaller or lesser known companies have had a better chance to make the final shortlist, which has given us a better opportunity to promote the county's diversity."

The premises of Direct 4 Baby which has been shortlisted in the Red Rose Awards 2019.

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County police among first to provide online interpreting service for deaf and hard of hearing

LANCASHIRE Constabulary is one of the first forces in the country to partner with SignLive, a deaf-owned organisation, to provide an online video interpreting service to enable the deaf and hard of hearing to report crimes through the 101 service.

The video is aimed at helping more people in the community to communicate in a way that works best for them and is intended for use with the force's non-emergency 101 service only.

SignLive is an online British Sign Language (BSL) video interpreting service which allows the deaf and hard of hearing to communicate with Lancashire Police online via Apple, Android and desktop devices.

Members of the public simply register with SignLive to set up their own account, which will allow them to contact Lancashire Police to report crimes and concerns that do not require an emergency response.

Chief Inspector Ian Mills of Lancashire Police said: "We are working hard to ensure that all individuals and communities

Chief Inspector Ian Mills.

are able to contact us to report incidents and crimes. Working with SignLive further enhances our commitment and offer, ensuring an accessible and free service."

Inclusive

Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner Clive Grunshaw commented: "It's important Lancashire Constabulary is accessible to all members of the community, particularly those who are vulnerable, and this scheme, alongside improvements to online reporting, increasingly means that people have a choice about how to report a crimes and incidents.

"Developing safe and confident communities is a key priority for me and this service is about being inclusive and I hope it gives those who are deaf or hard of hearing more confidence to contact police."

And Joel Kellhofer from SignLive added: "We are delighted that Lancashire Police has partnered with SignLive to offer more communication tools to give the deaf community more access to their 101 service and we look forward to other potential opportunities within Lancashire Police in the future."

Lancashire Police already operate a text service for the deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to be able to register for the 999 emergency SMS service, however this service is not suitable for 101.

People should always call 999 when it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

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Champion LETTERS to the Editor

‘Sidelining’ of flooding report deeply disappointing for affected residents

RE: The story headlined ‘Long-awaited flood report was a waste of time and money, says MP’ (Champion, February 6) it is deeply disappointing that West Lancashire Borough Council and Lancashire County Council have sidelined yet another expensive consultant’s report on flooding.

This is what Burscough Flooding Group (BFG) think happened to Ormskirk’s Flood Report - if anyone knows better then please get in touch bfg@fullstopltd.co.uk.

April 2017: Jacobs finishes its study of Ormskirk’s flooding problems and issues its report to the Flood Risk Manager Authorities (FRMA) Lancashire County Council (LCC), West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC) and United Utilities (UU). The FRMAs keep Jacob’s Ormskirk Flood Report secret from the public. WLBC instructs Jacobs to adjust the emphasis within its conclusions.

January 2018: The revised Jacobs Ormskirk Flood report is re-issued to the FRMAs. The report still conflicts with the draft new local plan, because the basic tenets of flood prevention is to move developments to areas with adequate infrastructure which don’t flood from any source. The FRMAs continue to keep Jacobs Ormskirk Flood Report secret from the public.

January 2019: The new local plan consultation is complete and the supporting evidence base ignores the evidence in Jacobs Ormskirk Flood Report. The FRMAs agree to making Jacobs Ormskirk Flood Report public.

February 2019: LCC undertake a damage limitation exercise and tell the Champion they will ensure, “the [flooding and drainage] issue is considered when development is planned in the future” and consider “opportunities to fund [flood prevention and drainage] improvements through future developments”.

In conclusion, BFG really thinks whichever FRMA was responsible for sidelining the Jacobs report for Ormskirk should be made to refund the cost of the report to central government.

Exactly the same thing happened to the 2010 Entec report on Burscough which was kept secret until 2016 while the last local plan was completed.

Unfortunately, Burscough Flooding Group can only expect the same when Jacobs finishes its report on Burscough’s widespread flooding problems (due March 2019?).

Gavin Rattray,
secretary Burscough Flooding Group.

Open, meaningful public consultation needed on plans for bus station site

RE: The article in the Champion (February 6) in which Councillor Moran states he was “gobsmacked” that OWL councillors had criticised the bus station proposals, claiming they must have had a memory lapse as they had not previously voiced concerns.

However, it appears that it is Cllr. Moran who has suffered a memory lapse as he seems to have forgotten that the original proposals have apparently been altered and now show fewer bus stands, no coach parking facilities and an increase in student numbers and accommodation style.

Memory lapses aside, can we now please have an honest, open and meaningful public consultation on the plans especially as the published plans seem to disregard the council’s own Local Plan guidelines on the need for purpose-built student accommodation and having buildings in keeping with the surrounding area and not overbearing.

Also, reducing the size and flow of the current bus station? Not having coach parking facilities (are they trying to encourage visitors to the town or not?) and doing away with a town-centre car park?

Yes, the current site is shabby, dirty and unwelcoming, but surely local residents have ideas that could deliver something that is fit for purpose.

Anne Fletcher, Ormskirk resident.

It’s time to stop trying to dump everything on Skem!

I WOULD just like to respond to Linda Mathie’s letter (January 23) asking for the proposed Bickerstaffe development to be moved to Skelmersdale because we are “crying out for regeneration and development.”

The regeneration we need is not more warehouses but the kind that gives us a better work-life balance.

We have more than enough eyesore business parks around the town and we do not need anymore just because a nimby in Bickersatffe doesn’t want it anywhere near her.

Why have we still not got our town centre, for example?

The area she has proposed is already taken up by a monstrous landfill site that we had no choice on having, so stop trying to dump everything on Skem as we haven’t the infrastructure either.

Barry Briscoe, by email.

Action on accident hot spots what’s required not ‘useless publicity stunts’

WHY is Nikki Hennessy and the Labour group pushing for entrance gates into Ormskirk town centre?

The few vehicles that do go into the town centre do not cause problems unless there is poor judgement from pedestrians who seem to not pay attention to obvious motor noises.

The cost to install these gates (including councillors’ time and consultations) is not necessary, especially as the town centre is not really busy until market day.

A better use of the money would be to fix the curse of Five Ways which has had many serious accidents and maybe the junction by The Hayfield, again prone to accidents.

How about speed cameras or traffic controls along Long Lane which residents have been asking for years.

Again an accident hot spot but nothing gets done.

Can we stop with useless publicity stunts and get some work done or is common sense still being bullied by the health and safety police?

Leon Graham, by email.

● READERS’ letters can be posted or emailed to the respective addresses listed at the top of the facing page. They should be concise, preferably no more than 350 words, and include the sender’s name, address and contact details, although not necessarily for publication. Please note: The editor reserves the right to edit all items submitted for favour of publication.

Send your letters to: The Editor, Champion Newspapers, Clare House, 166 Lord Street, Southport PR9 0QA
tel 01704 392 400 email editor@champnews.com

Where was the opposition to all the other HMOs?

I HAD to smile at the photograph of Nikki Hennessy and Gareth Downing proudly shown supporting residents' oppositions to the plans for converting a house into student accommodation (Champion, February 6).

I have attended many meetings in the council chambers to object to conversions of houses for students and in my experience every member of the Labour Party voted to accept the HMOs that residents were appealing not to be converted.

The councillors did not live in the area and definitely did not support any residents who were affected.

Could it be there is an election in April and Labour need the support in Peet Avenue? Cynical you may say but could it be the truth?

Jean Taylor, by email.

Treat the knife carriers the same as the gun users

HAVING read the recent front page article regarding the carrying of knives, I believe this should be treated the same as carrying a gun and using one.

And if the carrier is a minor then the parents should be made just as guilty and take some of the blame and made to appear in court with them. That way maybe they will take more responsibility.

C. Grogan, Skelmersdale.

Town centre needs more parking spaces not fewer!

LAST week I drove into Ormskirk to spend some hard-earned cash in the town centre's shops and market.

But, not for the first time recently, I couldn't find a parking space despite trying five of the town's car parks.

In the end I gave up and took my business elsewhere.

Then I hear that the council want to press ahead with plans to build on one of the town's car parks.

How is that in the interest of businesses or visitors?

The council should be providing more car parking spaces, not doing away with the limited few that we have!

Dave Halsall, by email.

Shared roads experience calls for a bit of give and take on all sides

I WRITE as a cyclist and a motorist in response to Jim Sharpe's column headed 'Cyclists are fine by me as long as they stick to riding in single file' (Champion, February 13).

Jim reproduces a common misunderstanding, that riding in single file should be the norm.

The Highway Code advises cyclists that they should not ride more than two abreast and that they may need to move into single file in some situations. In other words, the norm is riding two abreast.

The code also advises motorists that they should leave plenty of space when overtaking cyclists.

This means that cyclists may cause some short delay to motorists. So, of course, do horses, horse-drawn vehicles, tractors, nervous motorists and so on. It's part of the experience of driving on shared roads and requires some give and take on all sides.

It takes less time to overtake a group of a given number when they are two abreast than when they are in single file and stretching out twice as far.

Tony Richardson, Newburgh.

PIC of the week

There may be unseasonably mild weather at the moment but there was still a touch of frost at dawn in rural West Lancashire.

Picture by Martyn Snape.

Readers can send their 'Picture of the Week' for possible inclusion in the Champion. Simply forward it to editorial@champnews.com and mark it 'Picture of ther Week'

More litter pickers are always welcome

RE: the recent letter from Barbara Richardson asking for information on organisations who pick litter, make footpaths etc etc.

I am a volunteer with the Beacon Rangers and we are always glad of more helpers.We meet on Fridays at 10am at Summer Street play park in all weathers then go as a group from there.

All tools are provided, just dress in suitable clothes and footwear.

Peter Meadows, Ashurst.

Advertising Feature

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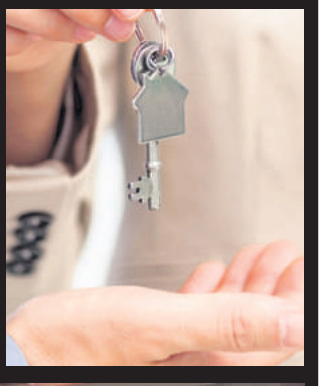

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Campaign to raise awareness of online health advice service

HEALTH professionals are seeking to raise awareness of the NHS 111 online service as an alternative to using the non-emergency telephone service 111.

The service uses the same algorithms that operators of phone line 111 use to recommend the right actions for patients with urgent but non life-threatening conditions.

It was introduced last year but the health service is seeking to promote its wider use through the ***Help Us Help You*** campaign.

Dr Kieran Murphy, Medical Director for NHS England (Cheshire and Merseyside, Lancashire and South Cumbria), said: "You can access NHS 111 online on a smartphone, tablet or computer 24 hours a day, seven days a week and if needed you will be connected to a nurse, doctor or other trained medical professional.

"This provides another convenient way to get the right help or advice when you need it. "

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Borough ranked 'mid-table' in survey of best places to live for people under 26

. . . but council says it is "committed to providing an environment that supports and engages young people"

Report by **Henry James**

WEST Lancashire has been ranked in the 'mid-table' in a survey conducted by the BBC of the best places to live if you are under 26.

The study looked at a wide range of categories including access to mental health care, average rent prices and levels of unemployment.

The 378 local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland were listed from the best performing to the worst, with top spot going to Islington in London.

The study, entitled *Know Your Place*, allows people to see how their area scores in different headings.

Other criteria rated include the number of bars, pubs, clubs and music events, how good the 4G connection is and the quantity of sports facilities. The criteria was chosen after discussions with more than 1,000 young people.

Overall West Lancashire was rated an average score of 5 out of 10.

For 4G coverage, which looks at the area's 4G signal, the borough rated 86% and scored 8 out of 10.

In the mental health care section, West Lancashire scored 10 out of 10, with the borough being adjudhed to hit 100% of its NHS mental health targets.

According to the survey the average rent price per bedroom in the borough is £293 (score 8/10), while the study found that the percentage aged 16 to 25 in West Lancs is 15% and the number of moving into the area is 479 (score 7/10).

In the category for bus services, however, West Lancs scored a shocking one out of 10. This looked at the average number of buses per day (255) and the metres of bus routes per square km (1,962).

Improvement projects

It fared better in the employment category with a score of 7/10, with the number of young people claiming welfare benefits per 1,000 at 25.

Findings showed that the proportion of the area that is natural land (not farmland or parks) is 5% (score 1/10), while West Lancs also scored badly in sports facilities (1/10) with the study listing the number in the borough at 78.

And for bars, pubs and clubs the borough scored 0 - "the lowest number of venues per unit area."

In response to the findings a spokesperson for the borough council said: "West Lancashire Borough Council is committed to providing an environment that supports and engages young people.

"The council operates four leisure centres as well as urban and country parks across the borough. Ormskirk town centre offers a vibrant nightlife and there are also major cities and towns adjacent to West Lancashire that are accessible to young people in the area.

"The council is currently progressing major improvement projects. These will see the development of two new Leisure and wellbeing hubs in Ormskirk and Skelmersdale that will offer a wider choice of opportunities and facilities for the younger population.

"The regeneration of Skelmersdale town centre is about to start and it is hoped that future phases will also deliver a better nightlife in the centre of the town.

"Providing more affordable housing in the borough, as part of the Local Plan, is also central to our commitments to future generations. The council already manages and operates a stock of almost 6,000 council properties that are available to rent when the allocation criteria is met."

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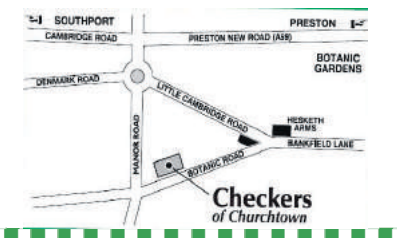

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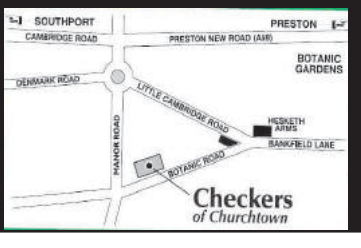

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CCG plan to launch community-based dermatology service

...and patients invited to share their past experiences of treatment for skin conditions

Report by **Henry James**

THE West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group is seeking to introduce a new community-based dermatology service for patients in the borough.

And to help them achieve their aim the commissioners would like to hear from any patients who have used local dermatology services in the past.

Although there are hundreds of diseases and conditions affecting the skin the most common ones include eczema, psoriasis, suspected skin cancer, acne, rosacea and leg ulcers.

The CCG is currently inviting potential providers to take part in a procurement process and to co-design the new dermatology service with them, alongside local patients and carers. The service will be available to all ages.

Carol McCabrey, service redesign manager for NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "Skin disease is common and very distressing for the individuals involved, sometimes causing both pain and disruption to their day-to-day lives.

West Lancs CCG chief officer Mike Maguire.

"Patients in West Lancashire requiring dermatology services are currently having to visit hospital for treatment as there is no community-based service closer to their homes."

The commissioners are aiming for the new service to improve the health of the local population; offer high-quality care; a sophisticated triage system that involves technology and to maximise minor surgery skills available in GP practices.

CCG chief officer, Mike Maguire, added: "Technology will be a fundamental element of this service and will transform the way we look after dermatology patients in the future.

"We plan to utilise up-to-date technology at GP practice level such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality surgery, as well as using innovative tools such as 3D teledermatology to assist further with diagnosis and treatment.

"To create a new service that is truly co-designed, we would like to ensure patients with dermatology experiences have had the opportunity to share their views with us. If anyone would like to offer their views and be involved in this process, we would like to hear from you. We would especially be interested to hear from parents and their children about their joint experiences."

Anyone with experience of any dermatological diseases wishing to be involved in creating the new service can contact the CCG at wlccg.myview@nhs.net or by telephone on 01695 588 203.

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Martin Mere news

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Splashing fun for all the family this February half term

Get your wellies on, get outside and take part in the North West Puddle Jumping Championships being held at WWT Martin Mere until Sunday 24th February. Bring your friends and family and see who can make the biggest, craziest splash with our special 'splashometer' - you'll be judged on height of splash and creativity. There's daily winners and lucky 'super-splashers' receive fantastic prizes!

As well as the main puddle jumping competition area, there's a practice zone set up to help you perfect your splashing techniques. Our craft room is also open daily and is full of puddle jumping themed arts and crafts.

Victoria Fellowes from Martin Mere said: "We know that children love nothing more than to splash about in puddles, so we thought we'd give them the chance to channel their inner splasher through our puddle jumping competition. It's all a lot of fun and we know that children who love puddles often grow up to be adults that love the outdoors. So, through these championships, we're gently nurturing a love that may help protect wetlands and the wildlife that depend on them for years to come."

We're also offering you the unique opportunity to name a swan if you visit us this half term. Head over to our Discovery Hide to find out more about the amazing whooper swans which visit us every year from Iceland. There are currently a number of swans on the mere that have ring numbers but don't have a name. All you have to do is spot a swan with a coloured ring on its leg, use the touchscreen to see if it's got a name and if it hasn't, fill out a slip and leave your suggestion in the box. Staff will review and allocate names and a full list will be shared on our Facebook page.

As well as the puddle jumping area, there's lots of activities around the centre to make a fun-filled family day out. Pop along to our daily talks and feeds to find out more about some of the species at the centre, hand-feed birds as you explore our grounds and let the kids go wild in our adventure playground.

Our Mere Side Café overlooking the beautiful Swan Lake is also open and serving delicious treats to suit all tastes. Before you head home, check out our shop will sells a wide range of gifts, treats and bird care items.

For more information, visit wwt.org.uk/martinmere or follow #puddlejumping

Visit the web site www.wwt.org.uk/martinmere to find out what's on the reserve at the moment as well as all the upcoming events

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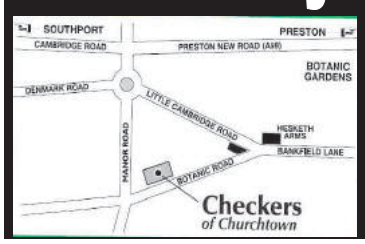

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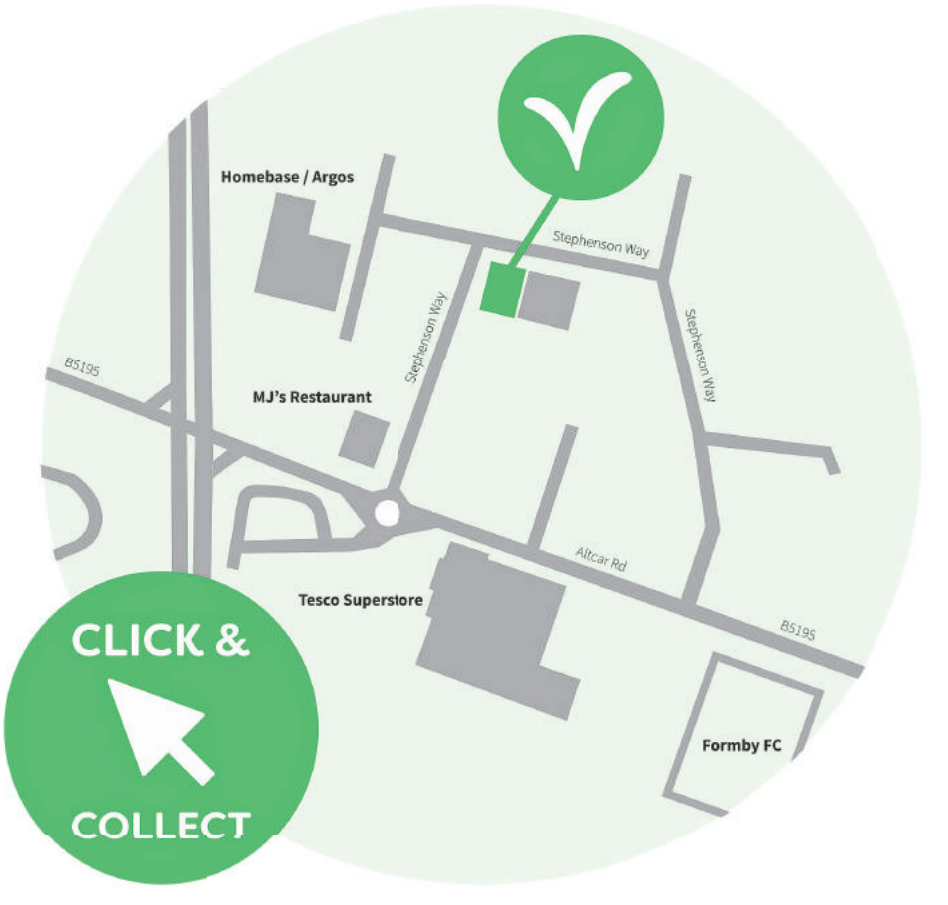

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MP calls on PM to preserve free TV licences for over-75s

7,000 households in West Lancs could lose benefit

Report by **Henry James**

ROSIE Cooper has tackled the Prime Minister on the Conservatives' "failed" manifesto pledge to retain the free TV licence for the over-75s after it was revealed that nearly 7,000 households in West Lancashire are at risk of losing the concession.

During Prime Minister's Questions, the West Lancs MP called on Theresa May to ensure that older people keep their free TV licences.

Ms Cooper said that millions of older people across the country could be set to lose the benefit in 2020 despite the Tories promising in their 2017 general election manifesto to protect free TV licences until 2022.

However, as part of the last BBC charter the Government devolved responsibility for the free licence policy and its cost to the broadcaster. It is now up to the corporation to decide the future of the scheme and they are currently consulting on a number of options including scrapping the free TV licence concession for the over-75s altogether; raising the eligible age to 80; or means-testing it, for example by linking it to pension credit.

Rosie Cooper.

The House of Commons Library has calculated that more than three million over-75s would lose the concession if it was means-tested linked to pension credit, while 1.8 million would miss out if the age was raised to 80.

Ms Cooper said: "Almost 7,000 constituents in West Lancashire, benefit from the policy of not charging for TV licences to those over the age of 75. Many of these people are the most isolated and lonely in our society and for many the TV is their only source of company and key source of information.

"Hundreds of these pensioners would be plunged into poverty if this fee were to be introduced, or plunged into further isolation, which would be an absolute disgrace and a tragedy.

Promise

"The Conservatives made clear in their 2017 party manifesto their promise to protect the free TV licences for over-75s, but it seems clear that yet again, the promise was not worth the paper it was written on.

"While taxpayers, customers and viewers want and expect to see the BBC spend their money wisely, investing to provide a universal service to educate, entertain and inform, they want and expect to see the Government keep their promises and stand up for and protect our older people and not remove the concessions they have such as their free TV licence."

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Drive to fill 110,000 vacancies in adult social care sector

Report by **Henry James**

A GOVERNMENT campaign has been launched to fill the 110,000 vacancies in the adult social care sector.

Every Day Is Different will showcase locally how rewarding social care careers can be, with an array of opportunities for progression and professional development - 96% of care professionals feel their work makes a difference to people's lives.

The campaign aims to:

- Attract new people with the right values to the sector and increase interest in adult social care as a vocation.
- Highlight the array of job roles, with an initial focus on direct care roles such as care workers, where there is the most demand.
- Equip the sector with the marketing tools to support the campaign and advice to recruit the right people and help retain staff, to address a high turnover rate.

Minister for Care Caroline Dinenage.

In the North West alone, there are an estimated 12,500 vacancies in the adult social care sector at any given time, with 49,000 leaving these jobs every year out of a total directly employed workforce of 163,000. It is predicted an additional 70,000 workers will be needed in the region by 2035, to keep up with the rising numbers of people aged 65 and over.

Minister for Care, Caroline Dinenage said: "There is huge demand for more care professionals across the North West who work incredibly hard to look after the most vulnerable people in our society. We must spread the word that careers in adult social care can be rewarding, varied and worthwhile."

Working in adult social care is about providing personal and practical support to help people live their lives. People who work in the sector could be supporting the elderly or people with a physical disability, autism, dementia or a mental health condition.

This could mean working in a care or nursing home as a care worker; out in your local community as an activities co-ordinator; in a hospital as an occupational therapist; or as a personal assistant from someone's home

The aim is to attract a diverse range of people but the campaign will focus on 20 to 39-year-olds as research indicated this group as the most likely to consider a role in adult social care in the next 12 months.

Store hosts furry pet workshops for kids

PARENTS are invited to take their children to free workshops at Pets At Home on the Ringtail Retail Park Burscough.

Focusing on caring for small furry creatures such as gerbils, hamsters and rabbits, and teaching children how to care for them, they will run every day from 11.30am until Sunday March 3 as part of the store's My Pet Pals Activity Club. Bookings can be made online at www.pet-sathome.com/petworkshops.

Children taking part will learn the essentials for keeping their pets happy and healthy.

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Apr 26	£89	Apr 19	£129	Apr 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	£159
May 3 Victorian Weekend	£109	Apr 26	£104	May 6, 13	
May 10, 17	£89	May 3 Victorian Weekend	£129	May 20, 27 Jun 3, 10, 17, 24	
May 24, 31 Jun 7, 14, 21, 28 Jul 5, 12, 19, 26 Aug 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	£99	May 10, 17	£104	Jul 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Aug 5, 12, 19, 26 Sep 2, 9, 16, 23	£199
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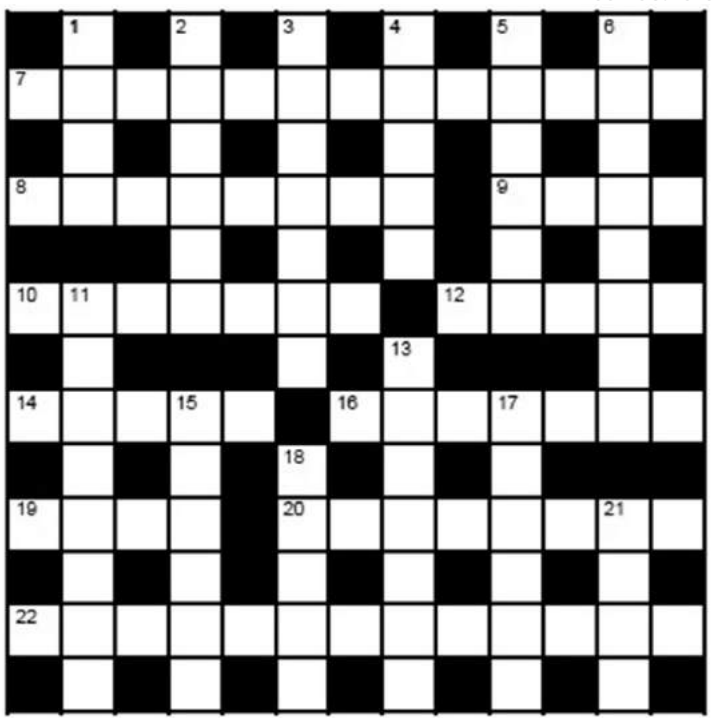

Last week's solutions:

Across: 7. Heroic. 8. Hoodoo. 9. Born. 10. Cauldron. 11. Unkempt. 13. Until. 15. Drawl. 16. Memento. 18. Volition. 19. Mule. 21. Bishop. 22. Ailing.

Down: 1. Zero. 2. Counterweight. 3. Icecaps. 4. Rheum. 5. Condensed milk. 6. Motorist. 12. Narcotic. 14. Beanbag. 17 Nippy. 20. Link.

ACROSS

7. The entire area that you can see without turning your head (5, 2, 6)
8. Odd, strange (8)
9. A system of words, letters, figures, or symbols used to represent others (4)
10. Mythical bird or a city in Arizona, USA (7)
12. Appear suddenly (3, 2)
14. Hirsute (5)
16. Guttural (7)
19. Fake, bogus (4)
20. To sweat (8)
22. Religious and charitable organisation founded by William Booth (9, 4)

DOWN

1. Flying toy or a bird of prey (4)
2. Charm, attraction (6)
3. Tout for business (7)
4. Open, obvious (5)
5. Classic horror film with famous shower stabbing scene (6)
6. Proverbially something that is rare and valuable (4, 4)
11. Expression of approval or agreement (4, 4)
13. Title of ancient Egyptian rulers (7)
15. To take away (6)
17. Child whose parents are dead (6)
18. Sudden flood; number of things coming in quick succession (5)
21. Frost formed on cold objects by the rapid freezing of water vapour in cloud or fog (4)

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Super slimmer Callum is a walking inspiration

Report by **Henry James**

STUDENT Callum Ayres has gone from struggling to get up stairs to "walking everywhere" after losing four stone in eight months and being named Ormskirk Rugby Club top young slimmer.

The competition celebrates Slimming World's younger members (16 to 21-year-olds) who've transformed their lives by adopting healthier eating habits and getting active.

Around 15 per cent of young people in the UK are now classed as overweight or obese and research shows that overweight teenagers are likely to continue to struggle with their weight as adults and develop weight-related conditions including type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Life was very different for Callum just eight months ago. He was unhappy with his size and feeling very unhealthy, even finding it difficult to walk up stairs.

Then in June last year Callum, a third-year student at Edge Hill University, joined his local Slimming World group. And when he returned to the university in September he joined the local group at Ormskirk Rugby Club run by senior consultant, Tina Whewell.

He said: "I was really nervous the first time I went to the group. I felt embarrassed and thought everyone would judge me for being overweight at such a young age. But I couldn't have been more wrong though, everyone was really friendly and made me feel welcome."

Callum before and after losing four stones in weight.

Callum began following Slimming World's Food Optimising plan, which encourages slimmers to fill up on healthy foods and make small changes to the way they shop, cook and eat that make a big difference to their waistline.

Now Callum says: "I love being able to wear the same clothes as my friends and enjoy going out with them more now I've lost weight. I've got so much more energy, I walk everywhere and feel so much fitter."

And Tina commented: "Everyone in our group is so proud of Callum - he's an inspiration. He's learned healthy habits that will stay with him for life.

"Obesity in young people is a big problem and it affects how they feel about themselves, as well as their physical health.

"Now Callum has the skills to make healthier choices and is much more confident too. I hope he'll inspire other young people in Ormskirk by showing them that there's no better time to take control of their weight than right now."

Everyone from the age of 11 upwards is welcome at the Slimming World group at Ormskirk Rugby Club every Tuesday evening and Wednesday and Saturday morning. Young people aged 11 to 15 can attend for free when accompanied by a parent or guardian and with the approval of their GP.

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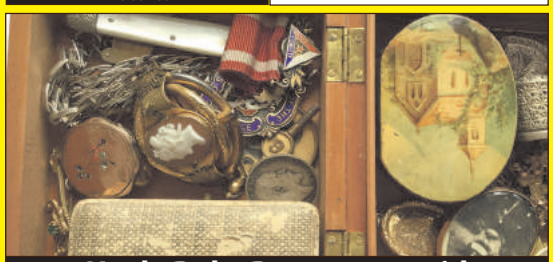

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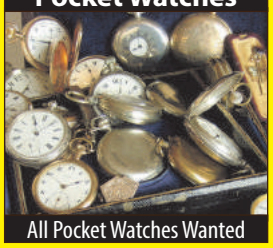

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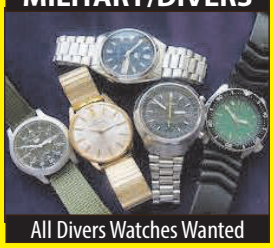

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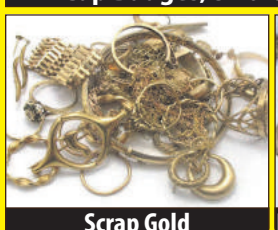

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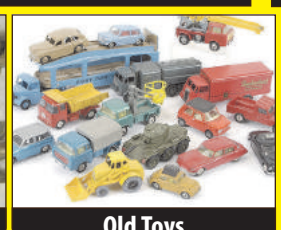

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Award nominations open for businesses with 'positive' impact

NOMINATIONS are being invited for the annual E3 Business Awards which recognise businesses and organisations that have made a positive impact on society.

The awards recognise and reward business excellence in the North West, particularly on the part of organisations that have shown a real investment in the three Es of enterprise, education and employment.

Entries are encouraged from small and medium-sized business, entrepreneurs, charities and social enterprises throughout the North West. Deadline for entries is April 24 with the awards ceremony taking part at Bolton University Stadium on Thursday, July 11.

Entrants can nominate themselves or be nominated and applications should be submitted via the www.e3businessawards.co.uk website.

Information about nominations, sponsorship and attendance can be obtained by calling 1 Events Media on 01254 790 786.

It's time our faithful four-legged friends were viewed in a more positive light

IT'S not often that I can honestly say I've had an uplifting experience, but a couple of days ago I had just that.

I was in Southport waiting for the 300 bus home to Maghull iwhen an elderly woman came along with her small dog and sat on a bench near the bus shelter where I was. It was a lovely little light-brown doggy and it and its lady companion were obviously very close.

The bus was late, so much so that I reckoned I'd possibly just missed it, and as there was no timetable in the shelter, I walked back to the next one down the road and satisfied myself that if the bus had indeed gone, it had done so very early.

Since you can see the said bus as it makes its way down Lord Street to turn round and begin its journey back to Liverpool, and there was still no sign of it doing so, I reckoned I had plenty of time to walk back to the terminus stop again.

The woman and dog were still there (it turned out they too were waiting for the 300) but by now the wee pet had progressed to cuddling up on its owner's knee.

Anyway, everything comes to he, she or dog that waits, and sure enough the errant bus turned up quite soon after. Which, in a way was a pity, because I had just decided to abandon the shelter and have a few words with the woman and her canine friend.

I really wish I had, for the obvious love - and yes, that IS the word for it - that they showed for each other brought home to me a lesson that I learned many years ago and that was reinforced after the death of my brother just over five years ago leaving me alone in this world with just my dog, Tina, and my brother's cheeky (and greedy) dog, Cinders.

My brief encounter with the little brown dog and its mistress (they alighted in Lydiate) got me thinking. I reckon it's about time that dogs were 'rehabilitated.' All too often they are reported in a negative way.

We all know the problem with them leaving little - or large - 'messages' on the pavement and on playing fields. Complaints about this in my home town of Maghull have featured regularly in Town Council, and before that the old Parish Council records since at least the 1930s.

Stories

Now at least responsible dog owners (and I think the majority are) recognise their responsibility for removing this undoubted blot on the landscape.

There are too the media stories of horrific attacks by dogs on children. For which I make no excuse except to say that rarely, if ever, does the story include what (if any) provocation the child inflicted on the dog.

Many years ago now I remember my then dog, the original Tina (the present one is Tina 4) who was hit on her head with a large Dinky 'supertoy' by an enthusiastic child. Happily, that Tina really liked kiddies and reacted by simply shaking her dazed head. I wonder what the reaction of your average adult person would be if they were attacked in the same manner for no better reason than the person wielding the weapon felt like it?

If Tina had reacted as I might in similar circumstances then she would probably have been 'put down' as the killing of a dog is euphemistically termed.

There are continuing demands in letters to the Press for dogs to be banned from open spaces and parks. How many such letters have there been to ban youths who leave a trail of smashed beer glasses stolen from pubs and broken play equipment meant for kiddies?

The fact is that dog 'horror' stories only get into the media because they are really so rare. Motor vehicles involved in accidents, unless of course it involves a bus, rarely publicly get a mention unless true carnage occurs. But I bet many more children are hurt in road accidents than ever are bitten by a dog.

And yet dogs are often very good friends to youngsters, and even more so to the more elderly members of our society for whom their dog is perhaps not just their best friend, but their only one.

When Tina 3 died several people stopped me in the street, or phoned me, to commiserate. One or two stupid and totally unfeeling chumps advised me to "cheer up, it's only a dog." Oh no it wasn't. And it wasn't an 'it' either - she was a very much loved she.

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90th birthday salute to community champ Chas

FAMILY and friends organised a special celebration for a pensioner who still gives up much of his time to help local community causes at an age when most folk have long since settled for a quiet life.

Charles (Chas) Addie is a familiar figure in his home village of Newburgh where he helps out at the local church, as well as being involved with the Skelmersdale University of Third Age (U3A) group.

To mark his 90th birthday a party was held at the Briars Hall Hotel in Lathom where the guests included Lancashire County Council's Champion for Older People, County Councillor Joan Burrows, and West Lancs borough councillor for Parbold, May Blake, who thanked him for "all the charitable work he has done for the community over many years".

The sprightly nonagenarian's neighbour, Tony Bates, told the Champion: "Chas is a wonderful person. He still leads a very active life and is always willing to help others. "He often freely gives his time to helping out Christ Church in Newburgh and is also involved with the U3A in Skelmersdale."

Tony said that the celebration was well attended, with guests coming from far and wide and entertainment provided by the Ukulele Minstrels Band. And he added: "Thanks go to all those involved in organising the event and also to Briar's Hall for their excellent hospitality throughout the evening."

● Right: Community champ Chas Addie is pictured at his 90th birthday celebration with County Councillor Joan Burrows and Councillor May Blake.

Sexual violence victims urged to seek support

Report by **Henry James**

Police commissioner funds campaign to raise awareness of 'shocking' problem and specialist help available

PEOPLE affected by sexual violence are being encouraged to seek specialist support as part of a new campaign launched in Lancashire earlier this month in conjunction with Sexual Violence Awareness Week (February 4-10).

Funded by the county's Police and Crime Commissioner, Clive Grunshaw, the campaign aimed to highlight sexual violence, particularly within relationships, and urged those affected to seek help from Lancashire Victim Services.

Mr Grunshaw said: "Any form of sexual violence is clearly unacceptable. We know that 31% of all reported rapes in Lancashire happen within relationships. This is shocking and we have to send out a clear message that being in a relationship does not equate to having the right to force or coerce your partner into anything they don't want to do.

"Anyone who uses physical force or coerces their partner to comply is committing a crime and it is important that we spread that message. If you are in a relationship where that choice is taken away from you I would urge you to contact Lancashire Victim Services for support and advice, even if you don't want to report to the police.

"Supporting victims and vulnerable people is so important and I am committed to making sure that specialist support is out there whenever and wherever it is needed."

Dee Conlon, operations manager at Lancashire Victim Services, said: "Sexual violence is a terrible crime that has a long-lasting impact on those affected. It can happen to anyone, from any background, male, female, young or old. Our specialist case workers are here to provide emotional support and help you to find the best way forward."

And Detective Chief Inspector Joanne McHugh from Lancashire Constabulary added: "We take all reports of rape and sexual assault seriously and will continue to work hard to investigate incidents of sexual violence within any relationship"

The campaign which has been developed jointly between the Police and Crime Commissioner's office, Lancashire Victim Services and Lancashire Constabular, will see posters, banners and leaflets distributed to health settings and public spaces across the county. Materials will also be shared on websites and across social media to raise awareness and direct people to Lancashire Victim Services for help and support.

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New Beatles film welcomed by Lennon biographer

Report by **Henry James**

AN author and journalist who grew up in West Lancashire and once agreed to forego a world exclusive scoop about The Beatles at the behest of John Lennon, has welcomed the news that acclaimed director Sir Peter Jackson is to make a new film about 'The Fab Four'.

The film will be based around 55 hours of never-released footage, shot between January 2 and January 31, 1969, of the studio sessions that produced the group's final album, *Let It Be*.

Ray Connolly, who lived in Ormskirk and Aughton for a while as a youth and a young man, is the author of *Being John Lennon,* a biography of the talented singer/songwriter whose life was cut tragically short when he was shot by Mark Chapman in New York in 1980.

A journalist on the *London Evening Standard* at the time, Connolly was told by Lennon that he had left the Beatles four months before the break-up of the group was made public.

However, Lennon 'advised' him not to print the story and Connolly obliged.

Speaking about the new film, he told the Champion that it will give people the chance to see rare footage of the original 'super group' rehearsing and added: "I am hoping they will show the group performing the rock 'n' roll numbers they performed in the Cavern years before they became world famous - it should be an interesting film.

The Beatles during the *Let It Be* sessions. © Apple Corps Ltd.

"The sessions were recorded in Twickenham Film Studios, which were cold and it was a miserable experience for them.

"Film studios are not really equipped for making good albums and in the end it was a cobbled-together production with a bit done at Twickenham Studios and a bit done at Apple Studio in Savile Row.

'Lovely place'

"The group was never that happy with the end result, although it does have some good tracks on it."

Connolly lived in West Lancs from the ages of 11 to 22, in Prescott Road, Ormskirk, near St Anne's Church, and before that in Long Lane, Aughton.

He used to go to school in St Helens, catching the bus from the old Ribble bus station in Ormskirk, and also had a year at Ormskirk Grammar School.

He says: "My year at Ormskirk Grammar School was the best year of my life. Ormskirk was a lovely place to grow up."

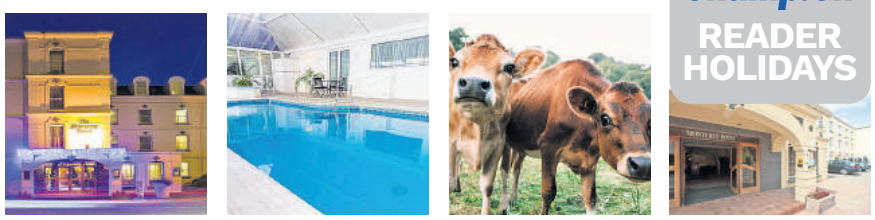
And he has no regrets about that missed scoop.

"I don't regret not printing the story. He was a mate. When Paul announced the break-up of The Beatles, John said to me 'why didn't you write the story when I told you?'! But he would change his mind all the time and I promised I wouldn't, so I didn't!

"Besides, I saw a lot of him in the next few years and got more stories from him, which I may have not have done if I had printed the break-up story."

Ray Connolly's book, *Being John Lennon*, was published at the end of last year and versions are set to be published in Russia, Serbia and Finland this year.

Champion READER HOLIDAYS



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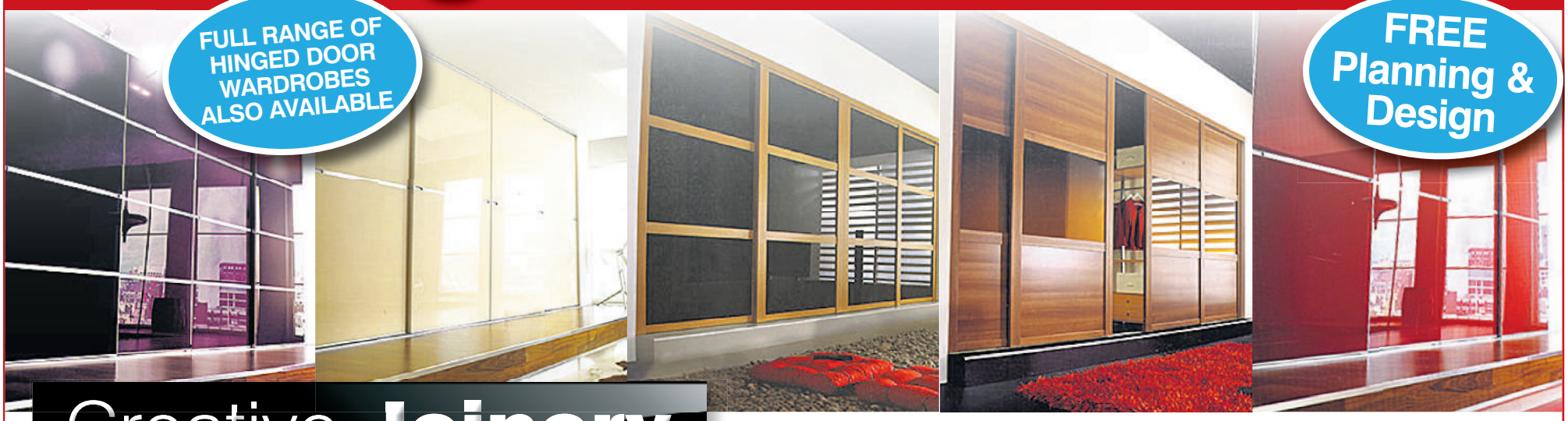

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Stars reunite for show

FOLLOWING two seasons of Shakespeare, Daniel Taylor Productions returns to The Epstein Theatre this spring with a production of Macbeth that reunites three stars of the international smash-hit musical Blood Brothers.

Following rave reviews for 2018's productions of Romeo and Juliet and A Midsummer Night's Dream, Daniel Taylor Productions is back at the Hanover Street venue with the Bard's bloody tale from Thursday 7 – Saturday, March 16.

The Hut People

See two hot folk groups

PARBOLD Douglas Music is delighted to present two of the hottest groups in the world of the folk festival scene, The Hut People and North Sea Gas will present three events throughout the day in the Auditorium in the Village Hall this Saturday (February 23) at 11am, 1.30 pm, and 7.45pm.

Gary Hammond and Sam Pirt perform as The Hut People and they are known as one of the most entertaining and best loved acts on the UK folk scene today.

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North Sea Gas, Dave Gilfillan, Grant Simpson, Ronnie 'Mac' MacDonald, is one of Scotland's most popular folk bands. They have sold out shows at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and around the world.

The Hut People will present a Pied Piper 'hands-on' music workshop at 11am for children and accompanying adults and a Family Fun Concert at 1.30pm in the afternoon.

The morning event provides an opportunity to experience exotic percussion instruments in a foot-stamping session.

Entry to the morning event provides free entry to the afternoon concert.

Organisers have said that the afternoon will be a family concert, "like nothing you have seen before". Expect feel-good dancing tunes, audience participation and humour aplenty.

The evening concert at 7.30 pm will open with The Hut People and then North Sea Gas will headline the evening.

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SOUTHPORT THEATRE

Events Calendar

FEBRUARY

The Bob Dylan Story
Thurs 21 / 7.30pm

Agatha Christie's The Mousetrap
Mon 25 - Wed 27 / Times Vary

MARCH

Hello Again...Neil Diamond
Sat 2 / 7.30pm

Alexander O'Neal
Fri 15 / 8pm

Circus of Horrors
Wed 20 / 7.30pm

Solid Silver 60s Show
Fri 22 / 7.30pm

Here Come the Girls
Sun 31 / 7.30pm

APRIL

The Life I Lead
Starring Miles Jupp
Sat 6 / 7.30pm

Thriller Live
Sat 20 / 8pm

Peter Pan – Easter Panto
Sat 27 / 2pm & 6pm

MAY

Daniel O'Donnell
Sun 5 / 4pm

Faulty Towers Dining Experience
Fri 10 - Sat 11
7pm arrival / 7.30pm start

Soul II Soul
Fri 10 / 8pm

Heather Small
The Voice of M People
Sat 11 / 8pm

Horrible Histories
Barmy Britain Live on Stage
Sat 11 / 2.30pm & 5pm

Elkie Brooks
Sun 12 / 7.30pm

JUNE

Summer of Love
Tue 4 / 7.30pm

Nick Lowe & Los Straightjackets
Fri 7 / 7.30pm

JULY

Paul Carrack
Thurs 4 / 7.30pm

Rhythm of the Dance
Sat 27 / 7.30pm

The Ballroom Boys Iain Waite & Vincent Simone
Sun 30 / 3pm

AUGUST

Barry Steele - The Roy Orbison Story
Sat 3 / 7.30pm

The Illegal Eagles
Fri 23 / 7.30pm

That'll Be The Day
Sat 24 / 7.30pm

Don McLean
Sat 31 / 7.30pm

OCTOBER

James Acaster
Cold Lasagne Hate Myself 1999
SOLD OUT
Thurs 10 / 7.30pm

Ben Elton
Thurs 10 / 7.30pm

Jim Davidson
People Fight Back
Sun 20 / 7.30pm

NOVEMBER

Stewart Francis
Fri 1 / 8pm

Jimmy Carr
Terribly Funny
Wed 20 / 8pm

Neil Oliver: The Story of the British Isles in 100 Places
Wed 27 / 7.30pm

The Sensational 60s Experience
Sat 30 / 7.30pm

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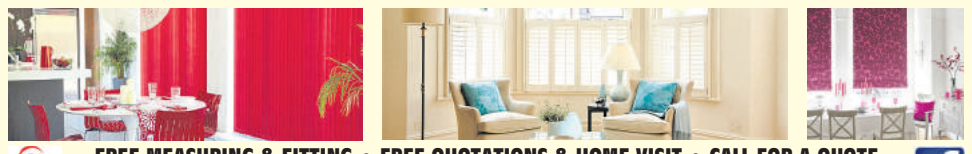
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Announcements

IN MEMORIAM

Johnson Edward (Eddie)
15th February 2011
To hear your voice and see you smile, to sit with you and chat a while, That is what we wish today, Dad in our hearts you will always stay.
Miss and love you always
Gary, Angela, Abbie & Chloe
xxxx

Johnson Edward (Eddie)
15th February 2011
We miss his smile, his kindly ways, With him we spent such happy days, We miss him when we need a friend, on him we always could depend
Granddaughter Alison and Great Granddaughter Aimeé x x

Johnson Edward (Eddie)
15th February 2011
We miss you Grandad in so many ways, We miss the things you used to say, and when old times we do recall, It's then we miss you most of all.
Grandson Phil, Kelly and great grandson Daniel
xxx

Johnson Edward (Eddie)
15th February 2011

I miss talking to you,
I miss the laughter,
I miss our trips out,
I miss my Dad.

But Dad,
As long as I have memories,
As long as I have tears,
You'll never be forgotten,
Not in a million years

Loving daughter
San and Alec
x x

To place a family announcement please call 01704 392392

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HUNT EDWARD JAMES
Angela would like to thank all relatives, friends, neighbours and Eddie's work collegues for their kind messages, cards, support and to all those who attended the Funeral of her beloved Husband Eddie. Thank you also for your donations to the British Heart Foundation. Thanks to Andrew Housley for his lovely service. Thank you to M.L.S. especially Lisa for the dignified funeral arrangements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THOMPSON JOSEPH HENRY
Joe's family wish to express their sincere thanks to all of his family, friends, neighbours and ex-colleagues for their messages of sympathy, cards and donations received during their sad loss. Thanks also to all of the Royal Liverpool POCCU staff and also to the staff at Aintree Hospital Ward 11. Special thanks also to Father Godric and Father Boniface for the beautiful service at St Anne's Church, Ormskirk and also MLS Independent Funeral Directors, Aughton.

To place a family **announcement** please call **01704 392392** or visit **champnews.com**

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Announcements

DEATHS

THRELFALL RICHARD

9th February 2019

Aged 92 years

Died peacefully. Loving Husband of Jean, much loved Dad of Barbara, Richard and father-in-law to Anne. Cherished Grandad of Richard, Jamie and Sarah, Great-Grandad of Matthew, Archie, Stephanie and Beatrix. Richard will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Monday 25th February at 2:40pm. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations are being collected for Macmillan Cancer Support. Enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

DODSON EDDIE (EDGAR)

12th Feburary 2019

Passed away peacefully in hospital aged 99 years of Ormskirk

Devoted Husband of the late Mary and dear Father of Su Requiem Mass and Interment at St. Annes R.C. Church, Ormskirk, on Thursday 21st February 2019 at 2:00pm. Family Flowers only by request, but donations if so desired for R. N. L. I.

Donations and further enquiries please to Sally Hunter, MLS Independent Funeral Directors, 20, Moss Delph Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk, L39 5DZ Tel:01695 424888

DEATHS

CLAYTON IVY MILDRED

Passed away peacefully in her sleep

7th February 2019

aged 94 years

'A true diamond who touched the hearts of everyone'

The loving Wife of the late Alan. Much loved Mum of Kevin, David and Pat and partner Neil. Loving Sister to Roy. Devoted Nan to Shaun, Justin, Rachel, Melanie, Jenny, Sean and Hannah. Great-Nan to all her loving Great-Grandchildren. Flowers welcome. Funeral Service and interment at Ormskirk Parish Church on Wednesday 27th February 2019 at 3pm. All enquiries to Hunters of Ormskirk, 128b Burscough St, Ormskirk, L39 2BY. Tel: 01695 572997

BISARYA DR ANAND KUMAR

sadly passed away peacefully on February 18th 2019

Aged 79 Years

He was at home surrounded by loving family and friends. He leaves behind his beloved Wife Asha and Children Neil and Shruti and Satya, Kamal and Rani, Dheraj and Niharika. He worked diligently as a local General Practitioner for over 40 Years caring for generations of families in the local community.

He will be missed greatly. The funeral will be held at West Lancashire Crematorium on Thursday 21st February at 2.30pm.

DEATHS

COCKROFT JAMES RICHARD

11th February 2019

Peacefully in hospital aged 65 years of Upholland

The dearly loved Husband of Pauline, loving Dad of Lynn and the late Lee, dear Father in law of Mark and devoted Grandad of Megan and Oliver. Funeral service at Upholland Methodist Church on Monday 25th February 2019 at 1:30pm followed by interment at Upholland Parish Church. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale & Ormskirk. Tel: 01695 722122/720012

Want to place a family announcement? Visit **champnews.com**

FAIRHURST DOROTHY (DOT)

16th February 2019

Peacefully at Aaron Crest Nursing home, Skelmersdale surrounded by her family

aged 87 years

The dearly loved Wife of the late Ken, loving Mum of Ken, Lorraine, Stephanie, Robert and Philip, dear Mother in law of Elaine, Nigel and Vincent and devoted Grandma to all her Grand and Great Grandchildren. All enquiries to Melanie Hardman at H Hardman & Co., Independent Family Funeral Directors of Skelmersdale, Ormskirk & Scarisbrick. Tel: 01695 722122/720012

To place a family announcement please call 01704 392392 or visit champnews.com

DEATHS

CHARTERS DOREEN

On 10th February 2019

In her 94th year

Beloved Wife of the late Les, loving Mother of Sandra, dear Mother in Law of John, much loved Nans of Amanda, Nichola and Stephen, and Great Grandmother of Paul, Adam, Jack, Jasmine and Charlie. Funeral service will take place at Southport Crematorium on Monday 25th February at 1:20pm. Family flowers only by request donations if so desired for Alzheimer's Society. Donations and further enquiries please to M. Rushton Funeral Directors, 100 Marshside Road, Southport, PR9 9TG. Tel: 01704 214118.

GREEN DENIS

At home after a short illness on 10th February 2019 aged 73 years

A much loved Husband to Bernie. Devoted Dad to Lorraine and Jonathan. Father In Law to Sharon. Dear Brother to Marilyn. Denis will be greatly missed by all his loving family friends and neighbours. A Funeral Service and Cremation will be at West Lancashire Crematorium on Monday 25th February 2019 at 1.00pm. Flowers welcome or if desired donations in lieu of flowers will be given to The British Heart Foundation in memory of Denis.

All enquiries to R. Banks & Son (Funerals) Ltd., Stretton House, 23 Hall Green, Up Holland, Wigan, WN8 0PB. Tel. (01695) 622099. www.rbanksandson.co.uk

ECCLES ELIZABETH (BETTY)

Died 6th February 2019

Aged 92 Years

Passed away peacefully, following a short illness. Much beloved Wife of the late Harry, dear Mum of Dave and Debbie, loving Grandma of Kate, Howard and Eric, and proud Great-Grandma of Jake, Lucy, Noah and Dylan. Loved and missed with tears and smiles. Service at St Peter's Parish Church, Birkdale on Monday 25th February at 10:30am followed by Interment at Duke Street Cemetery. Donations are being collected in lieu of flowers for Barnardo's. Enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

MORRISSEY (NEE McMULLEN) MARGARET ANN

February 11th 2019

Aged 72 years

Much-loved Wife of Barrie, devoted Mother to Gary, Sean, Kevin, Clare and Mother-in-law to Kim, Caroline, Fiona and Julian. Proud Nannie to Emmie, Charlotte, Ollie, Will, Lily, Ella, Toby, Finn, Anna, Caitlin and James. Thank you for showing us so much love - we are all heart broken.

Goodnight and God Bless X.

Funeral Mass to be held at Our Lady of Compassion Church, Formby on Friday 1st March 2019 at 12.00noon, followed by Cremation at Thornton Crematorium. Family have requested no flowers, however, donations in memory of Ann are welcomed for Queenscourt Hospice c/o and all enquiries to Coyne Bros Funeral Directors 3 Old Mill Lane, Formby, L37 3PE. Tel 01704 873899

DEATHS

BIRCH WILLIAM (BILL)

13th February 2019

Aged 84 years

Devoted Husband to Eileen for 57 years. Loving Dad to Debbie, Paula, John and Michele (deceased). Loving Grandad to John, Becky, Samantha, Lyndsay and Daisy. Great Grandad to Ellie Mae and Max. Reunited with Michele on her birthday. Loved and missed beyond words. Funeral service at St. Richards Church Skelmersdale on Friday 22nd February at 12pm, followed by burial at West Lancs Crematorium. Enquiries to Devonport Funeral Services Tel: 01695 731199.

CLEGG JACK

Passed away peacefully at Home on 6th February 2019 aged 82years

Originally from Birkdale, Loving feather of Barry, Neil and Paul. Missed by family & friends, funeral service at St Helens Crematorium on Friday 8th March at 2pm. No flowers please, but should you so wish, donations being gratefully received for Carla Lane Animals in Need. For Further enquiries Tel Neil 07596 397410

HARGRAVES JANET

12th February 2019

Suddenly in hospital aged 70 years

Loving Wife of Brian. Devoted Mum of Karen and David. Dear Mother in law of Paul and Claire. Amazing Nan of Tom, Ben and Emily. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Thursday 21st February at 1.45pm. Family flowers only please by request, donations if desired for the Alzheimers Society. All enquiries Margaret Whitelam Skelmersdale Funeral Service 29/31 Sandy Lane Tel: 01695 559868

DEATHS

COOPER IRENE (NEE SOUTH)

12th February 2019

Peacefully in hospital aged 71 years

Much loved Mum of Glen, Ross and Craig. Cherished Nanna of all her Grandchildren. Will be sadly missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will take place at West Lancashire Crematorium on Friday 22nd February at 4pm. Family flowers only please by request. Donations if desired for North West Air Ambulance. All enquiries to Margaret Whitelam, Skelmersdale Funeral Service 29/31 Sandy Lane Tel: 01695 559868

MCQUEEN MIRIAM HELEN (NEE AGNEW)

11th February 2019

Aged 45 Years

Loving Wife of Gary and much loved Mummy to Jude and Estella, Daughter of Norman and Sandra, Sister to Fiona and Daughter-in-law of Neil and Linda.

Funeral Service and Committal at Southport Crematorium Tuesday 26th February 2019 at 2.40pm.

Dress code informal. Family flowers only please but donations appreciated to 'The Brain Tumour Charity' c/o Dean Brothers, Funeral Directors, Deans Court, 76 Gores Lane, Formby, L37 7DF.

EVANS RITA

Born 5th March 1935

Passed over the Rainbow Bridge

16th February 2019

Peacefully surrounded by love

Will be missed always by Walter. Family Funeral only. Donations in Rita's memory are being gratefully received for Lancashire German Shepherd Rescue.

DEATHS

McIVOR WILLIAM 'DAVID'

31st January 2019

Aged 70

Dearly beloved Husband of Alexandra, wonderful Father of James and Nick.

'Wise, generous, and always a gentleman, he will be missed by all'.

Funeral service to be held at Southport Crematorium on Friday 22nd February 2019 at 13:20.

Family flowers only. Donations if desired for Prostate Cancer UK to www.justgiving.com/williamdavidmcivor, or c/o M. Rushton Funeral Directors, 100 Marshside Road, Southport, PR9 9TG. Tel: 01704 214118.

BALL ANNIE OLIVE 'OLIVE'

12th February 2019

Aged 87 years

Died peacefully after a short illness. Loving Wife of Richard, much loved Mum of Graham, Sue and Mother-in-law to Margaret. Cherished Grandma of Nick and beloved Sister of Ann, Jill and the late George, Peggy, Beryl and Don. Olive will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. Service at Southport Crematorium on Friday 1st March at 10:40am. Family flowers only please, but if desired donations are being collected for the Stroke Association and Cancer Research UK. Enquiries to Howard's Funeral Directors, 1-5 Roe Lane, Southport, PR9 9DR. Telephone: 01704 500086.

SAMMONS MICHAEL

A Great Character enjoyed a good Joke, will be sadly missed by all. Deepest sympathy to Sally, Paul, Julie, Michelle & all the family.

From Michael

PUBLIC NOTICES

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(BIRCH GREEN ROAD, SKELMERSDALE, WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2018

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Lancashire County Council have made an Order under **Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984**, as amended, the effect of which will be to temporarily prohibit traffic on the roads set out in this notice.

1. No person shall cause any motor vehicle to proceed over that length of Birch Green Road, Skelmersdale:-
For section 1 – from its junction with Feltons to its junction with Findon
For section 2 – from at point at the Birch Green Road roundabout at Woodlands Primary School to the Birth Green Road rounabout heading in an easterly direction.
For section 3 – from its junction with Fosters Green Road to the Birch Green Road roundabout heading in a north direction.
2. The prohibition will be operative daily from 0930 hours until 1500 hours on Monday 4th March 2018 until Wednesday 13th March 2018, or until completion of the works within this period.
3. An alternative route for vehicular traffic affected by the closure is via:-
For section 1 - diversion via Northway, A577 Houghtons Road and the Houghtons Road roundabout at Ashurst Road.
For section 2 - diversion via the Birch Green Road loop.
For section 3 - diversion via Northway, A577 Houghtons Road and the Houghtons Road roundabout at Ashurst Road.

The temporary prohibition is necessary to allow carriageway resurfacing works to be carried out.

Authority given for this Order to be made:
Michael White, Network Regulation Manager, Lancashire Highway Services, 0300 123 6701 [Ref: HRiT/14737/HD]

www.lancashire.gov.uk

Lancashire County Council

West Lancashire Borough Council
Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 - Article 15

APPLICATION(S) FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

2018/1239/FUL Erection of extension to the existing sports pavilion building; alterations to the existing artificial pitch including the erection of 3 no. football stands; installation of a player/managers bench; erection of toilet and catering facilities; installation of turnstiles and alterations/extension to existing car park at JMO Sports Park, Liverpool Road, Skelmersdale.

2019/0084/LBC Listed Building Consent - Replacement of existing windows, replacement of rainwater goods, overhaul of roof and repair to existing chimney stacks at Needless Inn Farm, Lady Alices Drive, Lathom. The application affects a Listed Building.

2019/0089/FUL Demolition of two existing buildings (No. 33-35 and 37 Church Street) and erection of four/five storey mixed-used building comprising spilt-level retail unit (Class A1) at Ground and Lower Ground Level with Student Accommodation above. Landscaping to site areas as detailed. The proposal includes the formation of 2no. 'drop-off' car parking spaces and cycle storage on site at 33 - 35 & 37 Church Street, Ormskirk. The application affects a Conservation Area.

2019/0093/FUL Change of use of whole food store & cafe (A1/A3) to a bar/restaurant & function space with external seating area (A3/A4) at Chia Chia, 9 - 11 Aughton Street, Ormskirk.
The application affects a Conservation Area.

2019/0111/OUT Outline - Residential development consisting of apartments following demolition and site clearance including details of access and layout (all other matters reserved) at Former Hunter And Sons Warehouse, Moorgate, Ormskirk.

The applications are available for viewing on the Council's website www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning. Alternatively, the application can be viewed during normal office hours at 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk and at 1st Floor, The Concourse, Skelmersdale. If you wish to comment on the proposal you can do so via the Council's web site, by e-mail to plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk or in writing to Development and Regeneration Services, 52 Derby Street, Ormskirk, but these must be received within 24 days of the date of this notice quoting the application number.

Applications for Minor Commercial and Householder Development
In the event that an appeal is made against a decision of the Council to refuse to grant planning permission for the proposed development, and that appeal then proceeds by way of the expedited procedure under the written representations procedure, any representations made to the Council about an application will be passed to the Secretary of State and there will be no opportunity to make further representations.

How information about you will be used
The personal data you provide will be used as part of the Council's statutory planning duties in processing planning and related applications. Some of the personal information, including your name and address, you provide will be published. For further information about this notice or how we use your personal data please see: http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/planning/planning-privacy-notices/level-2-development-management-cil-privacy-notice.aspx and http://www.westlancs.gov.uk/about-the-council/legal-statements-and-foi/privacy-and-data-protection-gdpr.aspx. Hard copies are available on request.

John R Harrison DipEnvP., MRTPI Director of Development and Regeneration
Dated: 20th February 2019 PDNOT1033

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Kammac PLC of Gladden Place Gillibrands Industrial Estate, Skelmersdale, WN8 9SY is applying to change an existing licence as follows. To keep an extra 60 goods vehicles and 60 trailers at the operating Centre at the M58 Distribution Centre, Gillibrands Road, Skelmersdale, WN8 9TB

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

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LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
(GREEN LANE, TARLETON, WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2019

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Lancashire County Council have made an Order under **Section 14(1) (a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984**, as amended, the effect of which will be to temporarily prohibit traffic on the roads set out in this notice.

1. No person shall cause any motor vehicle, cycle or pedestrian to proceed over that length of Green Lane, Tarleton from its junction with Blackgate Lane to its junction with Liverpool Road.
2. The prohibition will be operative from 0000 hours on Wednesday 20th February 2019 until 2400 hours on Sunday 30th June 2019 or until completion of the works within this period.
3. An alternative route for vehicular traffic affected by the closure is via:- Blackgate Lane - Southport New Road - Liverpool Road and vice versa.

The temporary prohibition is necessary to allow essential carriageway works to be carried out due to multiple subsidence damage.

Authority given for this Order to be made:
Michael White, Network Regulation Manager, Lancashire Highway Services, 0300 123 6701 [Ref: HRiT/16978/EW]

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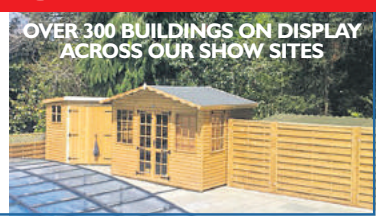

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The odd drop of rainwater never hurt fans of the more traditional Land Rovers

A slew of screaming headlines said it all

AS BIG motoring stories go, this was no damp squib. It's still another couple of months before we finally get to see Land Rover's new Defender – but the interior's leaked!

A slew of shouty headlines from the motoring magazine websites said it all; NEW DEFENDER: INTERIOR LEAKED AHEAD OF UNVEILING, LEAKED: NEW LAND ROVER DEFENDER INTERIOR, and, perhaps most promisingly of all, 2020 DEFENDER INTERIOR LEAKED FULLY. As someone who spent most of his childhood in the back of old Land Rovers and still reckons a Series IIA isn't really complete unless its cabin comes with a slighty musty, countryside-ish whiff, this was great news, because it meant someone at Solihull had really been paying close attention to what old Land Rover owners are used to. If the new Defender's interior has leaked before it's even been launched, it's still a *proper* Land Rover!

Unfortunately, the story the motoring mags had, er, splashed with referred to a leak of the metaphorical rather than literal sort, and for legal reasons I'm obliged to point that there's no indication that Solihull's next mud-plugger will actually allow in the occasional dribble of rainwater every time you take it off-roading. But, if the latest images are anything to go by, it looks like Jaguar Land Rover have spent a lot of time getting the mix of chunky, hard-wearing plastics and the details that are bang-up-to-date, like the neatly-integrated digital dash display, right. A copy-and-paste of the Discovery's cabin it ain't.

It's had to tread a very tricky tightrope with the new Defender – it is, after all, the direct descendant of 1948's Series I, so it's got to look, feel and sound like a Landie of the old school while simultaneously meeting all of today's safety regulations, doing more than 25 to the gallon and comfortably sitting at seventy on the motorway.

I'll happily accept that the farming set have all moved into Nissan Navaras and Mitsubishi L200s now, but the new Defender's also got to hit it off with those vastly different swathes of people devoted to the old one – so that's the British Army, Kanye West and the entire readership of *Your Horse*. Tough call.

But I'm keeping my fingers crossed, largely because JLR (which has just cut 4500 jobs) could use a lucky break, and because the precedent set by the Jaguar XJ nine years ago shows that it *is* possible to reinvent a British icon that everyone previously declared impossible to reinvent.

The new Defender won't please absolutely everyone, but I'd rather that than there be no new Land Rover at all.

Whatever happens, it'll still be devastatingly effective off-road and bang up to date. Probably better built than the old one, too. Although if the interior leaks, at least you'll know why…

David Simister is the editor of Classic Car Weekly

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57	**BMW** 530 TDM SPORT AUTOMATIC SALOON, in black with cream leather, sat nav	**£6995**
60	**JAGUAR** XF 3LTR DIESEL AUTO, in black with leather & sat nav	**£6950**
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56	**VW** JETTA 1.9 DIESEL AUTO, saloon, silver, 79,000 miles	**£2495**
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PP	**MERCEDES-** BENZ CL500 COUPE silver, black leather	**£2995**
09	**FORD** FIESTA 1.4 ZETEC 5DR, FSH	**£2995**
53	**AUDI TT** COUPE, manual, silver/blue with cream leather	**£2750**
59	**HYUNDAI** 5DR, blue	**£2750**
11	**VAUXHALL** INSIGNIA 1.8 SRI 5DR, black	**£2995**
08	**FORD** FOCUS ZETEC 5DR, in silver	**£2695**
11	**CHEVROLET** SPARK, 1.2 in silver	**£2495**
11	**CHEVROLET** SPARK 1.2 LS 5DR, 53,000 miles, silver	**£2395**
05	**VW** GOLF 2.0 GTDi SPORT 6spd 3DR, in silver	**£1995**
57	**FORD** C-MAX DIESEL, in light blue metallic	**£1795**
55	**FORD** FOCUS 1.6 DIESEL 5DR, manual, in light blue metallic	**£1595**
57	**MAZDA** 5 2.0 DIESEL SALOON, in blue	**£1500**

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55	**SUZUKI** ALTO 1.1 5DR, blue, 70,000 miles	**£1295**
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55	**FORD** KA 1.3 3DR, red 56,000 miles	**£1250**
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52	**FORD** KA, silver, only 44,000 miles, silver, full MoT	**£995**
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Alex Griffths (centre) celebrates opening the scoring with his teammates. Picture by John Driscoll

Bright start to no avail after second half collapse

Skelmersdale United 1
Clitheroe 4

SKELMERSDALE started brightly and took the lead in last Tuesday night's relegation six pointer, but were undone by two former strikers who returned to haunt their former side.

In the end the difference between the two teams was their abilities to find the net, with three of Clitheroe's four goals were scored by two former Skelmersdale United forwards.

Clitheroe started the game on the front foot but gradually Skelmersdale settled and started to apply pressure at the other end and with only 12 minutes on the clock they got their reward.

Paul Cliff swung the ball in from the left and Alex Griffiths got onto the ball at the far post, finishing with a shot under Clitheroe goalkeeper Terry Cameron to give Skem the lead.

Two former Skelmersdale players combined to wipe out Skem's advantage. Max Hazeldine held the ball up then after seeing off a challenge he put the ball to the far post from where Harry Blackburn equalised.

Matters became pretty even then until the referee intervened with what is best described as a poorly judged decision on 28 minutes.

Pratt dribbled the ball into the left side of the Skelmersdale penalty area but the ball appeared to be going out for a goal-kick. Skelmersdale's Jordan Tyrer moved to challenge Pratt but pulled back and didn't complete his challenge.

Pratt went down and even the Clitheroe fans in the stand shook their heads, but referee Stuart Morland pointed to the penalty spot.

After a delay of about 90 seconds, Pratt slotted home the spot kick to give Clitheroe a crucial 2-1 lead. It was controversial though.

On 37 minutes Skem should have had a penalty, but the referee waved play on.

Blackburn dribbled into the Skelmersdale area and rounded goalkeeper Ryan Kirkman, who clearly brought him down, but no penalty was given.

Clitheroe were the better team in the opening minutes of the second-half, Pratt shot high and wide then former Skem player Jason Jeffries netted only to be given offside.

On 53 minutes Clitheroe got their third goal. Pratt flicked the ball on and Hazeldine ran between two defenders before blasting his shot into the roof of the Skelmersdale net.

Things became almost impossible for Skem on 76 minutes when John Keatley was dismissed for a second yellow card. It is uncertain as to the exact reason but the consensus was that both bookings were for dissent.

In added time Clitheroe made it 4-1 through Blackburn for his second of the night.

Brave Skem cause a scare for promotion chasers but come away empty handed

Report by **Neil Leatherbarrow**

Mossley 1
Skelmersdale United 0

SKELMERSDALE produced an impressive performance away at promotion chasing Mossley on Saturday, but came away with nothing to show from it.

It was a frustrating afternoon as they had an equalising goal wiped out just before half-time for a debateable foul and elsewhere relegation rivals Glossop North End had a good away win, making things just that bit more difficult for Paul McNally's team.

Changes were made from the team that lost at home to Clitheroe the previous Tuesday, goalkeeper Liam Boden, debutant Mike Samson and Louis Keegan coming into the starting eleven, with some new faces on the bench.

Mossley began the game on the front foot but Skelmersdale limited them to very little in the way of threatening raids on goal.

The one promising attack saw Liam Boden nip swiftly from his line to close down and smother Raul Correia as the number eleven looked to lift the ball over him.

At the other end Alex Griffiths skilfully broke from the centre of the park but lost the ball as he reached the 18 yard box, but it was a demonstration of Skelmersdale's potential.

Adam Jones put a header over the Skelmersdale crossbar and home goalkeeper Josh Ollerenshaw grasped the ball at Sean Yeldrem's feet.

For a bottom of the league team playing away to a promotion chasing side, Skelmersdale were doing very well.

In the 23rd minute Max Leonard went to ground a bit easily as he tussled for a ball on the left with Samson. In what looked a well rehearsed move the free-kick was swung into the six yard box, Correia lost his marker and headed inside the near post.

In the 35th minute Skelmersdale got the ball into the net. Tom Molyneux chipped in a corner and keeper Ollerenshaw flapped at the ball, Samson got his head onto the ball and headed it home.

Samson raised his hand but referee Kieron Johnson signalled for a foul. With half-time beckoning Skelmersdale went close again, receiving the ball to his feet in the penalty area John Keatley who was playing in an unaccustomed forward role, managed to turn and hit the ball at goal, Ollerenshaw sprawled to his left and was able to prevent a goal.

With only a bit of luck Skelmersdale could well have turned around with a share of the goals scored. For a period after the interval Mossley held the upper hand as they went to finish Skelmersdale off. Samson scrambled one ball away, another was headed over his own crossbar by Skem defender Keegan, and Liam Boden made one superb reaction tip over his bar from a point blank Correia shot, Skem clung on and they were still in with a chance.

Gradually Skem got back into the game but their main problem was that they were not opening the Mossley defence up when they had possession, so they were not doing enough in front of goal to score.

From a Skelmersdale perspective, the game drifted away in the end. They had gone to Tameside with many expecting another big defeat, but they can be proud of their performance and workrate.

They matched and worried one of the better teams in their division, sentiments that were echoed by manager Paul McNally after the match, who said: "This was one of our better performances this season against a good side, really strong outfit. Even their manager said we deserved something from it, I think that speaks volumes for the team."

McNally continued with a look at the future when he added: "We looked really good and I am hoping that if we can carry that on over the next 11 games it will give us half a chance."

11 points from safety as battle for league survival becomes a lot harder

SKELMERSDALE United go across the border to Wales on Saturday where they will take on Colwyn Bay.

Manager Paul McNally will welcome back experienced central defender Michael White, the former Burscough FA Trophy winner has been absent for the last three games serving a three match suspension.

McNally has one big question to answer though, does he change a defence that performed well at Mossley to bring White back or does he leave him on the bench and make him fight for his place in the starting line-up?

If Skelmersdale can repeat the show they put up at Mossley they must surely be in with a chance of picking up points on their trip the land of the dragon.

Mossley were in top form going into last week's game but Colwyn Bay do not represent as tough an obstacle. They are tenth in the table and their home record is decidedly shaky, from 14 games they have only won five and have lost six.

Skelmersdale have already picked up a point against Colwyn Bay in their only goalless draw of the season back in September and were only denied victory by a magnificent save by the Welsh goalkeeper Paddy Rutter in added time.

In his post match interview on Saturday, Paul McNally said that he has planned for the suspension of John Keatley and he will be hoping to be strengthened by the return of Kieran Brislin and Connor Belger. It could be a good day for Skem.

March will be a crucial period for Skelmersdale. They might be 11 points from safety in Evo-Stik Division One West but they face a group of games that can be won.

Two dates for the Skelmersdale supporters' diary are Saturday, March 2 and Tuesday, March 5 when they are at home to the two teams immediately above them in the table, Glossop North End and Kendal Town.

Meanwhile, Burscough supporters still have one more blank Saturday to endure in their enforced absence from the football field. The date they will be looking forward to is Tuesday, February 26 when they are away to Irlam.

The men's hockey team in action against Lancaster

Hockey team boost title hopes

EDGE Hill's men's hockey team strengthened their silverware aspirations with a 2-0 victory over Lancaster.

Both goals in their win came in the first half, through Matthew Stacey and Jac Horwood.

The result leaves Edge Hill in second, two points behind Northern 3A leaders Bangor with two games in hand. They travel to the leaders next in what is likely to be a title decider.

Elsewhere at Edge Hill, the women's football team's hopes for a double were dashed at the Northern Conference Cup quarter-final stage after going down 2-1 at home to Leeds Beckett thirds.

Lea Winter had given the hosts an early lead before the Yorkshire side hit back in the second half.

In football, third travelled to second in Northern 2A as Edge Hill's men's firsts played out a goalless draw at Liverpool firsts which did neither side any favours, because it means UCLAN firsts cannot be caught at the top of the table.

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